

# Association Manual

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## **CHAPTER 1 • THE ASSOCIATION**

### **1.1 – BACKGROUND**

USA Track & Field, Inc. (USATF) is the National Governing Body for track and field, long distance running and race walking in the United States.

USATF is a volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organization with a staff of professional program administrators located at the National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana. Our programs appeal and extend to all levels of the sport, from children through adults, from newcomers to the sport to Olympic champions.

Our mission statement reflects this philosophy: USA Track & Field drives competitive excellence and popular engagement in our sport.

### **1.2 – USATF ASSOCIATIONS**

The basic constituency of USATF shall be Associations. USATF is divided into 57 local Associations. All Associations shall be separately incorporated entities, in good corporate standing, and must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as 501(c)(3) non-profit entities that are not private foundations.

The primary objective of an Association is to assist in the development and growth of the sport of track & field, long distance running, and race walking in the designated Association within its geographic jurisdiction. The Associations are responsible for the local “grass roots” level of the sport, including, but not limited to, individual memberships, organizational memberships (local clubs), event sanctioning, scheduling and coordination of Association championships, and marketing.

Requirements for forming an Association and maintaining minimum Association standards are described in Article 6 and Regulation 7 of the USATF Bylaws and Operating Regulations. USATF also provides informational resources for the Associations.

### **1.3 – ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

#### *Officers*

Each Association must elect officers, who are typically a president, a vice president, a treasurer and a secretary.

The process for the election and the responsibilities of each officer should be set forth in your bylaws. Officers should serve on the Association’s board of directors. They are the ones responsible for the day-to-day administrative aspects of the Association.

## *Board of Directors*

The board of directors should consist of the officers and the chairs for each of the committees established by the Association. Committee chairs may be elected or appointed, depending on the Association's bylaws. There are certain circumstances where sport committee chairs must be elected. (See "Job Responsibilities" section below.)

### **1.4 – COMMITTEES AND ATHLETICS DISCIPLINES**

Each Association may structure itself on the same order as the national organization with appropriate variations to meet its own needs. See the USATF Governance Handbook, which sets forth how the national organization is set up.

The eight (8) national sport committees are:

- Men's Track & Field • Women's Track & Field
- Race Walking • Men's Long Distance Running\*
- Women's Long Distance Running\* • Masters Long Distance Running\*
- Masters Track & Field • Youth Athletics

*\*Cross Country and Mountain/Ultra/Trail (MUT) each have a Council and fall under LDR in this structure.*

Delegates from clubs and member organizations make up these committees, with a chair elected from and by each committee or appointed by the Association president, depending on your bylaws [see USATF Regulation 7(G)(8)(b)].

In addition, the national organization has established several administrative committees. The national administrative committees are:

- Athletes Advisory • Law & Legislation
- Athletics for the Disabled • Officials
- Budget & Finance • Organizational Services
- Coaches Advisory • Records
- Diversity & Leadership • Rules
- Ethics

All but the Rules Committee can be effective committees at the local level (rules is not a local function). For smaller Associations, some committees may be combined.

Suggestions for the make-up of these committees follow:

- **Finance:** A small group chaired by the Association treasurer to draw up budgets and oversee the Association financial records.
- **Records:** Each sport committee may appoint a representative to this committee responsible for keeping records of achievements in their respective events.
- **Officials:** A large committee made up of all certified officials in the Association with the chair elected from the committee. An executive committee of 5-8 individuals should be selected to lead this committee.
- **Organizational Services:** A small group, appointed by the board, to oversee that membership applications, club/organizations applications and sanction applications are being processed and handled in a timely manner and to solve local problems that come under its jurisdiction. This committee should also develop and implement a marketing plan that includes coordinating a renewal mailing to individual and organizational members. The marketing plan should also address ways to increase membership.

The committee should develop a plan for sending out sanction applications to previously sanctioned events and those events that have not obtained a USATF sanction in the past.

The above committees, including their make-up and function, are presented for example purposes. Your Association bylaws will determine the exact make-up and function of the committees in your Association.

### **1.5 – JOB RESPONSIBILITIES / DUTIES**

The success of your Association will be dependent on the level of involvement that each of your leaders (board and committee members) takes in organizing and implementing the various activities, events, and programs. It is vital that an established set of job responsibilities/duties for each leadership position is included in your Bylaws or operating procedures.

Visit the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for sample job descriptions for some of the Association positions and committees.

### **1.6 – MEETINGS**

Meetings are a key vehicle for communication within the Association. Timely notice of meetings is critical for attendance and involvement. Notice of meeting times and locations should be printed in your newsletter or magazine, or included in your e-mail blasts, and posted on your website. It is recommended that you give at least thirty (30) days' notice of all meetings. Minutes of all Association meetings should be maintained. Accurate minutes are vital, as they constitute the permanent record of finances, proposals, decisions, and reports.

#### *Board Meetings*

It is best to schedule Board meetings on a regular basis at a consistent time and place as often as required to conduct the business of the Association. This information should be made known to all members in a timely manner so they may be involved and/or observe.

#### *Committee Meeting*

Each sport has its own season and will meet when necessary to discuss scheduling, financial support for athletes, local championship events, etc. Administrative committees will also set up their own meeting schedule as necessary to fulfill their assigned responsibilities.

#### *General Meeting*

General meetings of the entire membership of the Association may be held to discuss matters relating to all facets of Association authority and responsibility. The general membership of the Association consists of all of its members, including the Board of Directors, who must all be individual members of USATF, delegates from member organizations/clubs and unattached athletes or others as defined in the Association Bylaws. The Association may hold as many general meetings as it feels appropriate during the year.

#### *Annual Meeting*

An Association Annual Meeting is for the general membership and should be held no later than September to elect new officers, committee chairs and finalize national USATF Annual Meeting plans, so that annual reports can be forwarded to the National Office in a timely manner.

#### *Special Meetings*

Special meetings of the general membership or Board may be called when circumstances arise which require immediate attention. The requirements for such meetings are determined by each Association's Bylaws.

## **1.7 – ASSOCIATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

Each Association is required, by either the USATF Bylaws or by the Associations Committee Operating Procedures, to maintain or have on file certain documents and records. These documents and records include articles of incorporation or charter, Association bylaws, 501(c)(3) status, a copy of the minutes from the Association's annual meetings, and yearly financial records (990's). Failure to submit such documents to the National Office may result in the decertification of your Association, your Association not receiving delegate credentials at the Annual Meeting, and/or not being able to vote in Association Committee meetings or elections.

### *Incorporation - Articles of Incorporation*

USATF Bylaws require each Association to be a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit entity in good corporate standing. Each Association must be legally recognized in the state where its main office is located. This requires the filing of Articles of Incorporation with your Secretary of State office.

In many states the filing of your articles of incorporation or charter is as simple as completing a two-page application. Most states have these applications available on their websites. An Association is required by USATF Regulation 7(A) to have a copy of its articles of incorporation, charter and/or constitution on file with the National Office.

### *Bylaws*

Most state laws require corporations to have bylaws, and have state-specific laws regarding what must be and cannot be in them. Bylaws set forth the day-to-day operation of the corporation, summarize the various officers and their responsibilities, and summarize the make-up of the board of directors and any committees the corporation feels will be important for the carrying out of its activities. Under the authority granted USATF by the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act of 1998, an Association's bylaws must be consistent with the Act, and also include the provisions of Regulation 7(G). These provisions include specific requirements for election notices, conduct of elections, removal of officers and committee chairs, and grievance proceedings. Associations may also adopt operating regulations, which generally address matters not found in bylaws. Such operating regulations describe in further detail the policies and procedures for the conduct of the activities of the Association. An Association is required by Regulation 7 to have a current copy of its bylaws on file with the National Office. You should forward updated copies of your bylaws to the National Office as revisions are made.

### *501(c)(3) Tax Status*

USATF is a 501(c)(3) organization, meaning it is exempt from federal income tax. Each local Association is also eligible for 501(c)(3) designation from the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, approval by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization means that individuals or corporations who donate money to your Association may be eligible for a charitable contribution tax deduction.

Your 501(c)(3) designation may be obtained in either of two ways. The first is for the Association to complete a 501(c)(3) application (Form 1023) and file it with the IRS. The second is called a group exemption. Under the group exemption local Associations elect to fall under the USATF national umbrella and do not have to file separate applications for the IRS exemption. To qualify for the national USATF group 501(c)(3) exemption, you must have your organic documents on file with the National Office and complete the National Office annual request for information. Regardless, each Association is its own separate 501(c)(3) corporate entity.

If your Association does not (a) apply for its own 501(c)(3) designation, or (b) comply with the requirements for the USATF group exemption, the Association would not meet the requirements for

an Association as set forth by USATF, would be subject to income tax, and the contributions to your Association would not be deductible by the people who make them. See the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for more details on the USATF group exemption.

### *Annual Meeting Minutes*

Each Association is required to submit prior to the start of the USATF Annual Meeting a copy of the minutes from the Association's annual meeting for that year. The minutes should be detailed and thorough for a historical account of the finances, proposals, decisions, and reports.

### *Financial Records*

Each Association is also required to file financial records with the National Office each year. For those Associations that are required to file IRS Form 990 OR Form 990-EZ, a copy of the filed form meets this requirement.

For Associations that file Form 990-N (e-postcard), the financial filing requirement is to complete Part 1 of IRS Form 990EZ and either have it signed by a certified public accountant or at least two officers or members of the Association's finance committee.

## **1.8 – STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Each Association is expected to develop and implement a strategic plan specific to their needs. Having a strategic plan will provide your current board and future boards a blueprint for obtaining your Association's goals and objectives.

Elements of the Association strategic plan should include, but not be limited to:

- Acquire outside funding through sponsorship and grant programs
- Grow membership – individual and clubs
- Service your members
- Enhance communication to your constituents, either by regular mail, email, newsletter or website
- Implement or improve budgetary procedures that foster both responsibility and accountability
- Promote and market USATF's sanction program
- Develop grass roots programs
- Functioning sport committees

Visit the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for the steps in developing a strategic plan.

## **1.9 – DIVERSITY**

### *Introduction*

Diversity is an important issue for all Associations. Part of the Association's "mission" as the local voice and face for USATF is to ensure that our sport is available to all individuals equally, and that there is equal opportunity for all individuals to participate at all levels and in all roles – whether as officials, athletes, or Association officers, or in any other manner or position.

## **1.10 – INSURANCE COVERAGE**

### *Association Coverage*

Associations are automatically covered for incidents covered under the USATF Commercial General Liability policy. This includes meetings, camps, clinics, offices, etc. Association owned camps and clinics must be registered with the National Office using the appropriate form (See Chapter 12.3 of this Manual).

### *What's covered?*

This is general liability coverage. That means it covers claims based on negligent acts on the part of the Association. This policy protects from lawsuits that may be brought by third parties. For example, if someone slips and falls at an Association meeting and sues the Association, the claim would be covered under the policy.

### *What's not covered?*

**Theft:** Theft and related damage to personal property is not covered. If you have substantial office or other personal property, you should obtain property insurance to cover its loss. It does not cover any loss due to employee theft. To protect against this, it is a good idea for all employees or volunteers who have access to cash or cash equivalents to be bonded.

**Directors & Officers:** In addition, while the liability coverage is effective for negligent acts of directors, officers, employees and volunteers resulting in personal injury, it does not cover directors and officers from injury, damage, or other loss resulting from the policy decisions they make. This type of coverage is known as Directors and Officers (D&O) insurance is available to all Associations in which their Articles of Incorporation are current with their Secretary of State filings and is purchased by USATF.

**Workers Compensation:** Injury to paid employees while on the job is also not covered. Workers Compensation is a separate type of insurance. If an Association has paid employees, it should investigate its state regulations regarding Workers Compensation insurance.

**Automobile:** If your Association owns a vehicle, you should purchase separate automobile insurance on that vehicle. The vehicle is not covered under the general liability policy.

Associations must notify USATF of any and all claims arising out of their Association. Please contact the Sanctions Administrator in the National Office to submit information on any such claims.





## **CHAPTER 2 • ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETINGS & ELECTIONS**

### **2.1 – INTRODUCTION**

Each Association is required by Regulation 7 to hold an Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting consists of all Association members, holds the election for officers and addresses any other matters that must be approved by the membership as a whole.

*NOTE: Employees working within the past 90 days may not participate in the election process. However, employees may, at the Association's discretion, vote if they are members of the Association and otherwise eligible.*

### **2.2 – DATE / NOTICE**

Each Association should reference its Bylaws to determine the notice (how many days prior to the date of the meeting that members must be informed of the date and location for the meeting) that is required for the Annual Meeting.

The Association's Bylaws must also minimally meet the provisions of USATF Regulation 7(G)(3):

- Notice of an election must be given to each member of an Association.
- Notice may be by mail, newsletter, the Association website, or the USATF website (If a website is to be used to inform members of the elections, then members must be informed as to where to find that information on the website through a mailing or newsletter).
- Notice must be given at least 30 days prior to the election. If there is a date for nominations, notice should also be given 30 days prior to this date. See the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for a sample meeting notice.
- If there is a change in the time or date of the election, 14 days' notice of the change must be given.

### **2.3 – AGENDA**

The proposed agenda for the Annual Meeting should be included in the Notice of the Meeting. Any matters that the Association must bring before all of the members of the Association should be included on the agenda.

A sample agenda might include the following:

- Review & approve minutes of prior annual meeting
- Accept nominations for office (if you hold an in-person election)
- Accept nominations for committee chair
- Balloting
- Announce results of election
- Make any appointments
- Approve any bylaw or other regulation changes
- Discuss any "Old Business" or topics for "New Business"



## ***2.4 – ELECTION PROCESS***

The process for each Association's elections should be set forth in their bylaws. All of the notice provisions set forth above should be reflected in the bylaws. The following is an abbreviated version of USATF Regulation 7(G). Additionally, these provisions are subject to change. You should reference the current copy of the USATF Governance Manual for all of the provisions of this regulation.

Visit the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for election assistance.



## **CHAPTER 3 • LEGAL & FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **3.1 – INTRODUCTION**

Each Association needs to have up-to-date bylaws, accompanied by supporting regulations and/or policies where desired, and a practical, working code of ethics and conflict of interest policy. Each Association should also have in place procedures covering these key financial aspects:

- Budgeting/Financial planning
- Day to day money management and internal controls
- Financial reports/records
- Taxes and tax reporting

Central to all of these areas is establishing who has the authority to spend/collect money and what procedures you will use to ensure accountability and mitigate risk of loss to the organization. It is imperative that access to all funds and deposit of all revenues be centralized to insure compliance with Internal Revenue Service Accountable Plan rules and business best practice, as well as local and state requirements if appropriate. All expenditures must be approved and supported by appropriate receipts, invoices or other documentation held by the central organization. Expenditures not supported by appropriate documentation provided to the central organization should be reported to the Internal Revenue Service as taxable income.

### **3.2 – BYLAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES**

Each Association must declare a primary location in one state, and file for corporate status in that state. If your territory encompasses more than one state, you generally will only need a business license in the other state(s). However, non-profit law may vary – you should get legal advice on how laws may differ.

There are three important documents in the formation of a legal Association. The first document – articles of incorporation or charter, depending on what your state calls them – is a legal requirement in which you state your purpose(s) and basic organizational set-up of your non-profit corporation. Some states have a particular format and key articles you must include, and some can even specify the language you must adopt.

Once these have been accepted by your state (generally through the secretary of state's office) and you have sent the state confirmation along with your articles to USA Track & Field, generally all you will have to provide is the annual or biennial document from your state indicating that you have continued to pay the necessary fees required of a non-profit corporation and updated your bylaws on file with them and your officers and/or board membership. You will likely not look at these again except when making major changes to your bylaws. However, if the very general framework your articles provide for changes in the future, you will have to amend them and re-submit them to your state. Again, given that each state has specific requirements, legal counsel should be consulted. From the point where your incorporation has been achieved, the most important document you will

need to deal with on a periodic basis is the second one – your bylaws. Each time you update your bylaws, you must inform your appropriate state agency or office, as well as USATF. USATF performs an audit of Association bylaws annually as part of its accreditation process, and looks for critical components like voting, elections, membership, annual and other meetings, meeting notices, and others to be in step with the provisions of the national Bylaws and Operating Regulations as required by Regulation 7.

The bylaws of an organization state and interpret the general corporate structure and governance policies of a nonprofit organization. In preparing bylaws, make sure that you refer back to and are consistent with the general provisions laid out in your articles of incorporation. The bylaws of an organization are always subordinate to the articles of incorporation; if there is a conflict, the articles will prevail. Bylaws need to be specific enough to provide a clear overall structure, but not so specific that changing needs of the organization would require frequent bylaw changes.

For some time now, USATF has had a model set of bylaws which an Association can review, put in your own Association-specific particulars (like method of election of officers, for which there are different acceptable options for you to adopt), and approve at a membership meeting (or a board meeting, if your previous bylaws allow for the board to make changes to the bylaws). A typical content for a complete and acceptable set of bylaws would look like this:

*Sample Bylaws for a Non-Profit Organization*

Article	Title	Typical content/paragraphs included
I	Purposes	Mission statement, programs
II	Location	Office
III	Members	Constituencies, levels of members (if any)
IV	Board of Directors	Power of Board, Number of Directors, Election and Term of Directors, Qualifications, Vacancies, Removal of Directors, Resignation, Quorum, Meetings of the Board, Informal Action by Directors, Meetings by Conference Telephone, Voting, Compensation, Absence
V	Committees	Executive Committee, Finance/Audit Committee, Standing Committees, Administrative Committees, Sport Committees, Special or Ad-hoc Committees, Task Forces, Term of Office, Vacancies, Rules
VI	Officers	Positions, Term of Office, Removal, Powers and Duties
VII	Agents/Employees	Positions, Compensation
VIII	Miscellaneous	Fiscal Year, Corporate Seal, Contracts and Other Documents, Gifts, Banking, Deposits, Books and Records, Loans to/from Officers and Directors, Indemnification, Insurance
IX	Amendment	Requirements for Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation changes

In addition to these first two documents, which are critical and mandatory in nearly every jurisdiction in the country, you are likely to find that a third document is necessary. Your bylaws should be difficult to change (a two-thirds affirmative vote is the standard amending requirement), and only important provisions of your governance need to be in them. Other “majority vote” type issues and parameters should be in a secondary document. At the national level, these are called Operating Regulations. At the local level, you can create your own regulations, modeled after the national set-up, but chances are you don’t need just to repeat all of that. An alternative is a collection of motions of your board by category, which can also be referred to as Policies.

### **3.3 – CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

USATF has national Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies. Many members are also suppliers of services on a private level – timing companies, t-shirt sales, equipment retailing or manufacturing, consulting services, and more. It is strongly recommended that each officer, board member, and any committee chairs not included in that group sign a disclosure statement on an annual basis creating transparency for any potential conflicts of interest. Such a disclosure statement would acknowledge your agreement with the Code of Ethics adopted by your board, and discloses any potential conflicts of interest you might personally or professionally have with any program, service, or agreement your Association is already in or might enter into in the future.

### **3.4 – BUDGETING / FINANCIAL PLANNING**

Each year, a budget should be established that will govern the spending of the Association throughout the year. Ultimately, the Association's Board of Directors should approve the budget. Typically, a budget committee is established to put together a proposed budget that is then presented for approval to the Board. This smaller working group should include the President, the Treasurer, any staff members, and other interested Board members. It usually makes sense for the Budget Committee to request budget proposals from its various committee chairs. Once this data is gathered, the Committee can proceed to prepare the budget.

Visit the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for assistance.

### **3.5 – DAY TO DAY MONEY MANAGEMENT**

With a budget in place, the limits for approved spending for the year are established. Each committee chair and/or event chair has his or her spending authority established accordingly and may not exceed the budgeted amount without further approval from the Board. How money is actually spent and accounted for is something that each Association needs to establish clear procedures for. If not already established, the Treasurer should develop such procedures. A simple, centralized process will provide the best control and accountability for the organization. The Treasurer is the focal point, as he or she is ultimately responsible for preparing financial records for the Association and accounting for the revenue and expenses. Sample procedures are similar to the following four points.

#### *Authority to Spend Money*

Event Directors, Officers, and Committee Chairs may incur expenses for items and in amounts included in the approved budget. The Treasurer should approve all other expenses in advance. After each event, the event director and/or committee responsible for an event should submit a detailed list of revenue and expenses for the event. The Treasurer may approve individual expense amounts to a maximum of \$500. The Board or the Executive Committee of the Board, if between meetings, must approve any greater amount.

#### *Expense Reimbursement Procedure*

Receipts for approved expenses should be submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Receipts should be submitted within 30 days, and the Treasurer should make payment within 30 days of receipt.

#### *Vendor Accounts*

Only the Treasurer shall have authority to establish accounts with vendors. If you are purchasing an item (i.e., t-shirts) that you want direct billed to the Association, submit any paper work to the Treasurer and/or contact the Treasurer to set up the account/order.

### *Bank Accounts*

The Association should maintain two bank accounts, a checking account and a savings account. The Board may approve other accounts. Per USATF Regulation 7(B), “the Chief Financial Officer (i.e. the Treasurer) of each Association should maintain custody and control of the bank accounts and other financial assets of the Association, its committees and subcommittees.”

### **3.6 – INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS**

Only the Treasurer and the President should have authority to sign checks for the Association. Only one signature should be required, although Associations dealing with large expenditures may want to require dual signatures for amounts over a certain threshold. In order to maintain financial checks and balance, all bank statements should be addressed to a different person than the person controlling the checkbook. For example, assuming the Treasurer controls the checkbook, the bank statement could be sent to the President or the Budget & Finance Chair.

### **3.7 – FINANCIAL REPORTS / RECORDS**

Keeping track of Association finances on a regular basis is essential to maintaining fiscal accountability and control. At a minimum, the Treasurer should prepare both an Income Statement and a Balance Sheet no less frequently than quarterly.

#### *Income Statement*

The Income Statement is simply a record of all of the money that came in (revenue) to the Association for a certain period (e.g., month, quarter, etc.) and all of the money that was paid out (expenses). Year-to-date information should also be included. See the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for a sample Income Statement. Notice that a budget column is also included so that the actual performance against the budget can be compared. The annual budgeted amounts have been prorated by quarters. In some cases, it will appear that expenses and/or income are far off budget but typically this is due to timing of the expense (or revenue) versus what was anticipated at the time of establishing the budget.

#### *Balance Sheet*

The Balance Sheet is a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Association. You should list all assets, which include cash and any tangible assets (computers, furniture, etc.) owned by the Association. Because Associations are required to maintain financial statements on a cash basis, there should be no liabilities since this includes amounts that are owed, but have not been paid (i.e. if you have a loan that is being repaid). See the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website for a sample Balance Sheet. In addition to the Income Statement and Balance Sheet, it is a good idea to keep track of your events individually so you know which ones make money and which ones do not. This can be very helpful in planning for the future. For each event, the Treasurer (or the Event Director) simply lists out the total revenue and expenses for the year. These numbers are consolidated under the “Events” line on the Income Statement. A simple spreadsheet can be developed, using Excel or Microsoft Works, for example, to track the Associations finances. Microsoft Money and Quicken are specialized accounting software that are fairly easy to use.

### **3.8 – TAXES AND TAX REPORTING**

#### *IRS Form 990 - Information Return for 501(c)(3) Organizations*

The IRS Form 990 is the informational tax return filed by 501(c)(3) organizations. Every Association must file some version of the Form 990 as outlined in the table below. The deadline for filing with the IRS is May 15th (unless an extension is requested). In order to complete the form

correctly, information about all the Association's finances is necessary which means centralized bank accounts and thorough bookkeeping is essential.

Form 990 Filing Requirements		
Form required...	If gross receipts are...	If assets are...
990-N E-Postcard	\$50,000 or less	Not applicable
990 E-Z	\$50,001-\$199,999, AND	Less than \$500,000
990	\$200,000 or more, OR	\$500,000 or more

Prior to the USATF Annual Meeting each year, Associations must submit a copy of their most recent 990 or 990-EZ to the National Office. If your Association is not required to file a 990-EZ or 990 with the IRS (i.e., you filed a 990-N e-postcard), you must still complete and submit page one of Form 990-EZ to the National Office.

This is a requirement for your Association's yearly accreditation (Required Category; Financial Report and Association Documents). For more information on 501(c)(3) status, please see Chapter 1.

### *Un-related Business Income Tax Form*

Your exempt activities include everything you do that is related to your exempt purpose, which is to promote athletics (track & field) and conduct athletic competitions. If your Association gets involved in revenue-generating activities that are not solely related to your exempt purpose, you may owe Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT) on any income generated from the activity.

The three UBIT tests are:

- It is a trade or business;
- It is regularly carried on; and
- It is not substantially related to furthering the exempt purpose of the organization.

Even if the above three tests are not met, the Internal Revenue Code exempts certain kinds of activities from UBIT:

- **Volunteer labor:** Any trade or business is excluded in which substantially all the work is performed for the organization without compensation. Some fund-raising activities, such as volunteer-operated bake sales, may meet this exception;
- **Convenience of members:** Any trade or business is excluded that is carried on by an organization described in IRS Section 501(c)(3) or by a governmental college or university primarily for the convenience of its members, students, patients, officers, or employees. A typical example of this is a school cafeteria;
- **Selling donated merchandise:** Any trade or business is excluded that consists of selling merchandise, substantially all of which the organization received as gifts or contributions. Many thrift shop operations of exempt organizations would meet this exception; and
- **Bingo:** Certain bingo games are not unrelated trade or business.

### **Relevance to common Association activities:**

- Membership and sanction fees – should be non-taxable;
- Association meets / events – should be non-taxable;
- Sale of merchandise – best if sold by volunteers unless donated;
- Sponsorships - tricky differences between providing acknowledgments and providing advertising;
- Newsletters and magazines – the IRS has complex membership fee allocation rules that can treat a money loser as an UBIT generator, so beware;
- Servicing other national governing bodies for fees – probably taxable;
- Interest, dividends, and royalties – generally okay if not debt financed; and

- Amount of tax – a specific deduction is allowed to eliminate the first \$1,000 of Unrelated Business Income. Amounts in excess are taxed at a rate of 15% for the first \$50,000, and higher rates thereafter up to 35%. You can consult a local tax advisor for specifics on these rules for assistance. You report this activity on IRS Form 990T.

### *Payroll Tax Returns*

If your Association has employees, you need to file quarterly payroll tax returns. This is Form 991, which covers federal tax withheld, social security, and Medicare taxes. At the end of each year, you need to prepare and file W-2's for each employee and with the IRS, along with the related summary form W-3.

### *Independent Contractors - Form 1099*

If you hire an independent contractor to perform services during the year and pay them more than \$600, you must prepare a 1099 listing those payments. The 1099s are sent to the independent contractor and filed with the IRS, along with the related summary form 1096.

### *State Filings*

Each Association should also check with their state to determine if a return must be filed with them. The relevant state agency is generally the Secretary of State or the Department of Revenue. Some states have no filing requirement, and some states require that a copy of the federal form 990 be filed with them as well.

In addition to the tax returns, if the Association solicits donations (as almost all do), you should check with the Secretary of State to determine if there are any special permits or filings that must be complied with. Many states regulate organizations that solicit funds from the general public.





## CHAPTER 4 • LOGOS & MARKS

### 4.1 – INTRODUCTION

The USATF logo is one of the organization's greatest marketing assets, as it represents the federation to the sports industry and the international Athletics community. The organization's identity on brochures, web pages, advertisements and other materials reflects USATF's values, purpose and vision. A cohesive identity program conveys an image of distinction and strength, building awareness and pride among those connected to the organization. Proper distribution and use of the USATF name, logo and marks are critical to maintaining the integrity of this organizational asset.

### 4.2 – ASSOCIATION LICENSE AGREEMENT

The Associations which comprise USATF are subject to (a) being fully accredited and (b) having a signed Association Logo Trademark License Agreement on file. The agreement means Associations will adhere to the printed guidelines on the use of any logo and trademark which falls under USATF's jurisdiction. Use of logos, trademarks, and misleading names is also governed by USATF regulations, including those directly from the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 1998 which protect the use of Olympic-related trademarks, the Rings, and use of the name "Olympic."

### 4.3 – ASSOCIATION LOGO

The Association-specific logos include the approved USATF marks (USATF wings, and USA Track & Field name) and the Association name (i.e., Adirondack, Alabama, etc.) **Associations are required to use the Association-specific logos** in all instances. Use of the USATF logo is not permitted unless approved by the USATF Marketing Department in advance.

#### National Federation Logo



#### Association-specific Logos



## *Logo & Brand Standards Manual*

A Logo & Brand Standards Manual is available to aid Associations in using the association-specific logo properly. The most up-to-date version of this manual is available online in the Associations Resource Center.

### *Affiliate Logos*

Distinct affiliate logos have been created for Member Organizations/Clubs, Sanctioned Events and Certified Courses. As described below, these logos can be downloaded from the USATF website. Downloading the logos from the website is important as the club or event personnel must agree to the logo use guide- lines/requirements as part of the process in receiving the download.

#### **4.4 – MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS / CLUBS LOGO**

Member organizations/clubs are limited to the use of the “Member Club” and “Member Organization” logos as they appear here. These logos are available to clubs that are current in the USATF database by logging into the Club Management page of the USATF website. Any club which uses the logo without maintaining its membership must remove the logo from its web site and printed materials.

#### **4.5 – SANCTIONED EVENTS LOGO**

Sanctioned events are limited to the use of the sanctioned event or sanctioned event/certified course logos. These logos are available online via the management area of the USATF calendar system. To download the appropriate logo the event director will need to visit the Calendar Management page of the USATF website.



#### **4.6 – PROPER USE OF USATF NAME & ACRONYM**

Whenever you use or distribute a USATF logo/mark or use our name/acronym, it is imperative that they are used properly:

- The correct presentation of the corporate name:  
USA Track & Field, Inc. or USA Track & Field  
USA TRACK & FIELD

*Note the use and position of the ampersand “&.” The word “and” is not to be used in our name.*

- The incorrect presentation of the corporate name:  
US Track & Field (always use “USA”)  
U.S.A. Track & Field (periods should not be used)  
USA Track and Field (“and” should never be used)  
United States of America Track & Field (do not spell out USA)

- The correct presentation of the acronym: USATF (all caps, no ampersand)  
*If you have access to multiple fonts, the correct font for the display of our name and acronym is Helvetica Neue Bold, and you should try to match the dark red and dark blue shown on our website.*

- Incorrect presentation:  
USAT&F (do not use the ampersand)  
USA T&F (no space or ampersand)  
U.S.A.T.F. (periods should not be used)



## CHAPTER 5 • ASSOCIATION ACCREDITATION

### 5.1 - INTRODUCTION

Regulation 7 provides for an Association accreditation process with objective standards set by the USATF Board of Directors recommended by the Organizational Services Committee in consultation with the Associations Committee. Either the Organizational Services Committee or the Associations Committee can recommend changes to the standards to the Board. Associations failing to meet the minimum standards are required to submit plans for improvement and have their progress monitored. Specifically, the two key points are:

- **Association Accreditation:** The Associations Committee shall accredit all Associations annually. For complete details on the accreditation process, please refer to USATF Regulation 7-F.
- **Minimum Standards:** In order to maintain good standing, an Association must meet all nine (9) of the required standards.

### 5.2 – REQUIRED STANDARDS

Standard	Standard Requirements	Method of Collection
Members	20 per 100k population	National Office pulled from automated membership system
	Minimum 400	
Clubs	0.5 clubs per 100,000	National Office pulled from automated club system
Sanctions	1.0 per 100k population	National Office pulled from automated sanction system
	Minimum 20	
Championships	3 T&F Outdoor (Y, O, M) 3 Racewalk (Y, O, M) 3 Cross Country (Y, O, M) 2 LDR, 1 event 5K or higher (O, M)	All events marked as Association Championship events will be pulled in the report from the automated sanctioned event system
	4 additional championships	
Officials	30 Certified Officials for Associations of 3 Million or less  Associations between 3 and 10 Million will have a minimum of 1 Certified Official per 100,000 of population	National Office pulled from automated officials system

	100 Certified Officials for Associations of 10 Million or more	
Financial Report	Positive net worth as reported on your 990 Forms	Associations uploaded forms to online system
Communication	Meet minimum criteria for Association website  Send either electronically or by mail 2 newsletters per year to full membership	National Office conducted overview of all Association websites based on the minimum criteria
Association Documents	Current bylaws  Articles of incorporation  Annual meeting minutes  990 Tax forms from the year previous to the current tax year (two years previous to the current year)	Associations uploaded forms to online system
Representation	4 Delegates for Associations with populations 2 million or less  6 Delegates for Associations with populations between 2 and 3 million  8 Delegates for Associations with populations greater the 3 million	National Office pulled from annual meeting delegate database, association workshop registration and Association Meeting roll sheet

### 5.3 – OUTSTANDING ASSOCIATIONS

There will be a restructuring of the Outstanding Associations process. This section will be updated when that has been finalized.

### 5.4 – PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Associations that meet all nine standards are afforded a Fully Accredited status and no further action is required on their part. Associations that have not met one or more of the required standards will be asked to complete a Plan for Improvement (PFI) addressing all of the areas in which they are not meeting the accreditation standards. The appropriate form for submitting a PFI can be found at <https://www.usatf.org/associations/association-resource-center-arc/accreditation>. The Accreditation Subcommittee of the Associations Committee is responsible for reviewing the PFIs and requires specific details about each plan item. The plan should show all steps that will need to be taken to achieve the standard, including target dates, responsible individuals, and the resources to be used. The Association board is asked to approve the Plan. Initial PFIs will be due to the Accreditation Subcommittee no later than what is stated in the timeline of each year. PFIs will be reviewed by the Accreditation Subcommittee after which feedback will be provided. PFI updates will be due on November 1 of each year. A final Accreditation Level will be issued at the Annual Meeting and used to determine voting eligibility.

When providing periodic updates ('progress reports'), supporting documentation on actions steps that have been accomplished/fulfilled or are "in progress" must be submitted. Regional coordinators of the Associations Committee are available to assist Associations in the preparation and execution of PFIs.

## 5.5 – WEBSITE REQUIREMENT CRITERIA

Criteria	Recommendation
<b>USATF Assn Logo</b>	Must be current and may not be stretched, blurred, or distorted in any way.
<b>Membership Info</b>	<p>A button on the home page directing members to "Join Now or Renew"</p> <p>A link in the main navigation bar titled Membership, that includes at a minimum a list of member benefits, link to renew or join and contact information for the membership chair</p>
<b>Club Membership Info</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled Clubs, which includes at a minimum links on how to find a club, how to register/renew a club and contact information for the club chair
<b>Sanction Information</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled Sanctions, which includes at a minimum links to access the sanctioned events form, contact information for the sanction chair and benefits of sanctioning an event
<b>Events Calendar</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled Events, which includes at a minimum current association sanctioned events
<b>Assn Champs Info</b>	<p>Within the Events page/navigation, a link titled Association Championships with the detailed current year information including at a minimum registration, location, date, time for each either on the same page or linked from that page</p> <p>Also within the events page/navigation, a link titled Results, which contains at a minimum past Championship results and place holder current year results</p>
<b>Assn Bylaws</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled About. Within this page/dropdown, a header titled Association Bylaws with either a document to download or the bylaws on the webpage
<b>Directory with emails</b>	Under the About link that is in the main navigation bar, a page/link titled Contact Us, this page should contain at a minimum the comprehensive list of all Association leadership with name, title and email address (phone number is optional), mailing address and main business phone number of Association
<b>Coaches Info</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled Coaches, which contains at a minimum a link back to the USATF coaching education site
<b>Officials Info</b>	A link in the main navigation bar titled Officials, which contains at a minimum a link back to the USATF officials site and contact information for the association Officials Certification chair
<b>Background check Info</b>	A link under the About section in the main navigation titled SafeSport, which includes at a minimum a link back to the SafeSport information on the USATF website
<b>Association Financial Info</b>	Under the About link that is in the main navigation bar, a page/link titled Financials, which includes at a minimum the current year budget and most current 990 documents

## 5.6 – 2021 ACCREDITATION TIMELINE\*

Date	Action
1/8/2021	Online portal for uploading is available to all Associations
1/31/2021	Items from Associations due to Accreditation Subcommittee
2/28/2021	Preliminary 2020 statistics sent electronically for review
4/1/2021	Questions/changes from Associations should be submitted to Accreditation Subcommittee
6/15/2021	Official 2020 Statistics sent electronically to all Associations and Regional Reps
7/11/2021	All required PFIs due to Accreditation Subcommittee
7/12/2021	Accreditation Subcommittee begins reviews of PFIs
8/1-31/2021	Accreditation Subcommittee reviews status of all deficiencies
10/1/2021	Updated Accreditation level assigned letters sent to all Associations electronically
11/15/2021	Final submission of PFIs from Associations in jeopardy
12/1/2021	USATF Annual Meeting – Final review by Subcommittee of all Associations

\* Timeline is subject to alteration without notice.



## **CHAPTER 6 • COMMUNICATIONS**

### **6.1 – INTRODUCTION**

Communication is key when it comes to an organization working well with its constituents and providing them information. It is important for an organization to provide information regarding what is going on so their constituents are informed and can participate in an active manner.

### **6.2 – REQUIRED CONTENT**

There are three things you must do within each Association. Two of them you must do every year – select delegates for the USATF Annual Meeting and hold your own Association annual meeting. The other one you must do, whenever your bylaws call for it, is the election of officers, and the election or selection of your remaining board members. Each time you plan to do one of these three tasks, you must inform all of your members. Since many Associations hold their elections and begin their delegate selection process at their annual meeting, this can usually be a once-a-year message to your members. If you choose to opt for a divided time frame for each of these activities, you would be required to send three different messages in a timely manner to all of your members.

### **6.3 – USATF NETWORK**

The USATF Network is offered by the National Office providing your Association with a professionally designed website that meets all USATF Association website requirements. A USATF Network site allows you to have a unique “URL” for your Association (such as <http://colorado.usatf.org/>) and is built around the same Content Management System that runs the National Office’s website. This allows you to easily add to and update your site without the need for a professional web developer or Webmaster. Network sites can also take advantage of automatic integration into the Calendar/Events system and pull content from the main site.

### **6.4 – EMAIL MARKETING RESOURCES**

The National Office has contracted with ExactTarget, an Internet-based e-mail marketing solution. The service allows the communications chair or anyone delegated by the communications chair within your association to use the system free of charge. The ExactTarget System is directly linked with USATF’s membership database, which makes the sending of mass emails simple. The use of the ExactTarget system allows for consistent branding by continuing the look and feel of USATF. Each Association has their own specific templates to use that are incorporated with their Association logo. ExactTarget allows you to create distribution lists where you can get specific about what members you wish to send certain information. It is imperative that the Association communicate with their constituency consistently.

Information on how to use the system can be found on the Association Resource Center. Exact Target also has a robust training and support platform at [exacttarget.com](http://exacttarget.com).





## **CHAPTER 7 • MARKETING & PROMOTIONS**

### **7.1 – INTRODUCTION**

All of the potential reasons/factors why someone might want to participate in your event should be listed by you or your organizing committee. Your marketing – your reach to a sponsor who would benefit from reaching those same audiences – and promotion – how you reach potential participants – will both benefit from the results.

### **7.2 – SPONSORSHIP ACQUISITIONS**

Almost every sports organization relies on revenue from sponsors to provide necessary funding for programs and services for their clients, members and fans. This is especially true of USATF, as both the national organization and Associations are largely dependent on sponsors to be successful. Associations can survive without sponsors, relying on membership and sanction fees to fund the activities and events, but the more successful Associations have done well in securing sponsorships and been able to build more diverse programs and services.

Locating and finding sponsors requires research, planning, an understanding of the product to be sold and knowledge of potential sponsors. Before volunteers can approach a prospective local sponsor, a plan of action needs to be carefully formulated.

Information on the sponsorship acquisition process is located in the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website.

### **7.3 – PRESS RELEASES**

#### *Let Them Know You Are There*

First, find out who your local media contacts are. Put together a mailing list. Your list should include newspapers, radio stations, and television stations and, if you are in a large market, the wire services. If there are two reporters who should receive your material, don't hesitate to send to both. Something to keep in mind: Remember to include your weekly newspapers. For example, the New York Times may not include your road race schedule on their agate page, but the Staten Island Register just might, especially if one of the events takes place there.

Keep a steady flow of information going to the media, but make sure it's useful. Calendars of events are always handy items. Advance material on upcoming events is good for the media. Instead, just put together something in outline form following the basic five W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why) of journalism.

#### *The Contact List*

An Association should create and maintain a media contact list of print (local newspapers, local or regional running publications i.e. Minnesota Running & Track, New England Runner), national

publications (i.e. Runner's World, Running Times, Track & Field News), local journals newsletters and community publications, club newsletters and any other print outlet deemed appropriate. You are the best source for what counts in your area. This is a valuable resource and gives you a good excuse to contact these people once in a while, just to update your information.

#### *How to Get Your Material to the Media*

Email is the most efficient way to reach the media these days, but there may be times when you should FAX or hand-deliver your material. If you have a release written on Monday on something that's going to take place Tuesday, by all means get it to the media as soon as possible. After distributing a press release via email or FAX, it's always a good idea to make a follow-up call to make sure it arrived. This also gives you the opportunity to answer any questions or pitch another story idea.

#### *Establishing Rapport with the Press*

If you stay at it long enough, your local reporters will get to know you as someone they can rely on for information on athletics. If you're a spokesman for your organization, this should be your aim. Make yourself available to the press, and let them know that if they have questions you're the person to contact. Naturally, this means that you've got to have the answers, or at least you've got to know where to go to get them. Always be truthful to the media because their trust in you is essential to promote your organization and its events. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell them, and then do every- thing possible to find the answer and get it to them ASAP. Media relations are all about providing a service. If you provide good and consistent service to the media, you will eventually see better coverage of your events.

#### *What's News?*

Any information you can provide on events and happenings is potential news. On a slow day, you never know what they will pick up. Calendar information on upcoming events, information on special events like the Minnesota Athlete of the Month - regularly picked up by local newspapers, special awards, events honoring awards, clinics conducted by elite athletes, results of events all are examples of the kinds of things that may attract news interest.

#### *What to do for calendars?*

If you want your events listed on calendars, by all means send this information. Find out what schedule the publication follows so you know how far in advance to submit the information. This includes the dates, sites and the names of contacts (along with addresses and phone numbers) for further information.

#### *What to do about results?*

If you want to get results to the media, get them there immediately! It's always a good idea to let the media know a few days in advance about your event, and that you will provide them with the results ASAP following the competition. Results of an event that happened on Saturday are worthless to a paper on Sunday. Be sure you have complete information, including the correct spelling of the athletes' names, correct times or distances, and the athletes' affiliations or hometowns.

### **7.4 – NEWSLETTER / MAGAZINE**

Every Association should seriously consider publishing a newsletter/ magazine for distribution to its constituency. Newsletters/magazines can vary from a simple, text-only version up to a sophisticated magazine layout with pictures and graphics.

The main purpose of your newsletter is to keep your constituency in- formed of what is happening in your Association, as well as nationally. This information should include Association and National

contacts, schedule of events and meetings, information on programs, articles on athletes and clubs, updates on Annual Meeting, etc.

Offering a newsletter/magazine is a great member benefit and should be promoted as such. It should be used as a tool for recruiting more members by providing something valuable to them that is not found in any other sources. You should also take advantage of your publication and its uniqueness, as way to generate added revenue by offering business, services and events the opportunity to advertise in it. By offering a vehicle to help disseminate their information to your members, you can pay for the costs of the publication. USATF members are typically the most active athletic participants in every area and purchase a lot of athletic equipment and products.

#### *Newsletter/Magazine Distribution*

At a minimum, you should try and include the following on your mailing list:

- Individual Members;
- Member Clubs;
- Sanctioned Events;
- Sponsors/Supporters;
- National Staff office and Officers;
- College & High School Coaches;
- Running Specialty Stores; and
- Running Camps

### **7.5 – MEDIA PARTNERS**

Newsletters and/or Association information can also be incorporated into existing publications (i.e. *New England Runner*, *Oklahoma Runner*, *Midwest Running*, and *Northwest Runner*) in the form of USATF news pages or columns at little or no cost. A good example would be *California Track & Running News* and *Running Journal*, both of which provide our Associations with one or more pages relating to their Association.

The drawback to this method is your information can get “buried” within the publication, and you are giving up your membership list to the publication. If you cannot provide a newsletter in any other manner, the positives of this method outweigh the negatives. In order for this relationship to work, you should 1) know the exact location and amount of space available for your use, 2) the deadline for submitting material(s), and 3) the cost involved.

Ideally you should make sure the magazine is mailed to your entire mailing list (see below) and you will need to negotiate the mailing cost accordingly. With the addition of your mailing list to the publication’s existing list, their magazine becomes more valuable to advertisers. Before making such arrangements you should become familiar with the new USATF Privacy Policy that can be found on the USATF website.

### **7.6 – WEB-BASED MARKETING SYSTEM**

The National Office has contracted with ExactTarget an Internet-based email blast company that can contact large numbers of individuals via email. The service allows the communications chair or anyone delegated by the communications chair to use the system. However, reaching the general public and/or your membership or community with email blasts is different than having a complete web-based marketing strategy.

#### *Marketing Audits*

Before you can embark on a major campaign to increase web traffic, you have to have a sense of where you are in the marketplace. Who are your competitors? How do you rank among them?

How are you communicating? How well are you articulating your brand, your offers, and your value? Which technologies are working well for you and which are not?

### *Site design*

When most people think of site design, they think of how the pages on your web site look and feel when a user lands on them. But there's more to site design today than just quick graphics and fast download times. You've got to focus on how many clicks it takes a potential customer to find the information they are looking for – ease of “the find” makes them happy. As well, certain key branding principles will guarantee that your site will be high on the Internet search engine ranking when someone “Google's” or “Bing's” you. This is all about integrating strategic vision, branding, design, sales focus, and technology needs.

### *Managed direct advertising and Search Engine Marketing (SEM)*

You want to select the right path for advertising success. Whether it's converting wasted print ad dollars to Google Ad Words or Facebook advertising, or choosing to stay with a great print publication that still works, everyone's goal in any campaign is to use the advertising channels available to them that will deliver the highest number of targeted impressions to their audience, the greatest number of actions, or the highest number of clicks.

Search engine marketing (SEM) through Google Adwords or Google Adwords Express, compelling graphics, video or text ads on the Google Display Network, and Facebook advertising campaigns have demonstrated paths forward with options and opportunities for most businesses.

### *Conversion optimization*

Conversion Rate Optimization is the process of improving content, page flow, landing page design, and site architecture in order to increase the percentage of site visitors who become customers.

You need to study the information in your marketing audit. Use it to improve your copywriting, landing page, page flow, calls to action, and design in order to help convert more site visitors into customers.

### *Content creation and management*

You more than likely don't have several copywriters on staff and are not able to react quickly to potential customer needs for regular social media updates, new articles, features, etc. But keeping your content fresh and enticing, attracting old and new users on a constant basis, is important to your success. You will need to set up systems where approved administrators can place appropriate materials on your site in a timely manner.



## CHAPTER 8 • MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATION

### 8.1 – MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

USATF offers various categories of membership in an effort to provide individuals with a special affiliation with USATF. The following categories, if indicated on the member's application, will be denoted in the central membership database.

**Athlete Members:** This membership category shall be open to any eligible, active athlete on an annual renewal basis. The athlete membership level is open to active athletes of any age, gender and skill level.

**Disabled Athlete:** For more information regarding this category, see the USA Track & Field Policy & Procedures for Evaluation of Requests for Accommodations Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act found on the USATF website.

**Official:** This category is open to any person serving as a competition official. A subset of this category is those members certified by USATF as Apprentice, Association, National, or Masters level officials.

**Coach:** This category is open to the coach of any eligible active athlete in Athletics. A subset of this category shall be those members who hold a USATF Fundamentals or a Level I, II or III certificate as designated by the USATF Coaching Education program, and are considered certified coach members.

**Administrator:** This class of membership shall be open to all persons who serve as club administrators, Association officers, staff members or event directors of USATF-sanctioned events.

**Parent:** This category is open to the parents or guardians of any athlete member of this federation.

**Fans:** This category is open to any supporter of the sport or USATF.

### 8.2 – MEMBERSHIP FEES

1 year:	\$30.00
2 years:	\$55.00
3 years:	\$80.00
4 years:	\$100.00

Dues and fees for all categories of membership are under the sole control of the USATF BOD. These dues and fees for individual members shall be proposed annually by the National Office, after soliciting input from USATF's committees and Associations (See Reg. 5.F of the Governance Handbook).

### 8.3 – MEMBER BENEFITS

The member benefits program has been designed around the principle of providing value-added special offers/discounts to members, increasing communications with members and adding resources for members to make their experience with USATF more efficient and enjoyable.

An updated list of member benefits can always be found at [www.usatf.org/membership/benefits](http://www.usatf.org/membership/benefits).

#### **8.4 – MEMBERSHIP DURATION**

USATF memberships are calendar-year memberships. This means that they expire on December 31st each year. New members joining in November or December will be afforded membership for the remainder of that year as well as all of the following year (e.g., if the member joins on November 14, 2016, the membership will be valid for competition and insurance purposes for the remainder of 2016 and all of 2017).

#### **8.5 – MEMBERSHIP CARDS / PACKET**

Membership packets are mailed out on a weekly basis. Each packet includes the bag tag, keychain tag, and membership card. In addition to the identification tags, each member receives two USATF decals. Below is what information will be on each identification tag.

#### **8.6 – MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS**

Members receive permanent membership numbers. The beginning of the number will indicate the year the member joined USATF. For example, a number that begins with “14...” indicates that member joined USATF in 2014.

#### **8.7 – MEMBERSHIP PROCESSING**

The processing of memberships is a vital function of the Association.

Identifying and registering eligible members in a timely manner is important to:

1. The insurance programs
2. Mailing of the membership card/welcome packets from the National Office.
3. Allowing members to begin taking advantage of their member benefits, especially registering for events that may require membership
4. Communications via Fast Forward, member email blasts and your Association newsletter; and
5. Your local finances.

#### **8.8 – ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

Visit the Association Resource Center on the USATF website link for assistance on operating the Association Management Area.



## **CHAPTER 9 • CLUB MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATION**

### **9.1 – MEMBERSHIP DURATION / NUMBERS**

#### *Duration*

Similar to individual memberships, club/organizational memberships are on a calendar-year basis. This means they expire on December 31st each year. New member organizations (and renewals) joining in November or December will be afforded membership for the remainder of that year as well as all of the following year (example: the organization submits an application to the Association on November 14, 2012; the organization/club will be considered a valid member for the remainder of 2012 and all of 2013).

#### *Numbers*

Clubs and organizations are assigned the same membership number each year. This allows athletes to correctly indicate their club number on the individual membership applications and will allow you to run accurate club reports off of the web-based membership system.

### **9.2 – MULTI-YEAR MEMBERSHIPS**

Clubs and organizations have the option of applying for a multi-year membership of up to four years. Clubs will update their profiles and practice schedules each year through the Club Management Area. Coaches and volunteers of a youth club will also need to complete a youth background check each year.

### **9.3 – MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Each year, all registered USATF clubs/organizations receive the following member benefits:

- The USATF Competition Rule Book, which is normally mailed out on a monthly basis to any new or renewing club, with the first mailing taking place in February or March after the Rule Books arrive;
- A downloadable certificate indicating the organization is registered with USATF for the current year;
- Liability insurance during registered club practices;
- The ability to purchase third-party certificates of insurance, in the Club Management Area;
- The right to enter relay teams and have athletes represent their organization at USATF championships;
- Subscriptions to *Fast Forward* and *Track Coach* magazines;
- The USATF Youth Guide (mailed to youth clubs only);
- Availability of Directors & Officers liability insurance; and
- Voting privileges at Association meetings.

Each local Association also provides Association-specific benefits, chief among them being the right to use the USATF club or USATF organization member logo on promotional materials. Clubs and organizations can download these logos by going to the Club Benefits page on the USATF website.



The main contact person for the club will sign in by selecting the Association, club number, and typing in his/her individual membership number and password.

### *USATF Member Club/Organization Logo Guidelines*

The only USATF logos or marks that a member club or member organization may use are the USATF Member Club and USATF Member Organization logos (a.k.a. the Logos) as described in this document or as otherwise approved in advance in writing by the USATF National Office's Department of Marketing.

Some additional parameters for use include:

- Only USATF-member clubs or member organizations events may use the Logos provided here. Unauthorized use may result in denial of future sanctions.
- No portion of the Logos may be obscured, removed, or altered in any manner.
- In order to maintain the legibility of the Logos, they may not be reproduced such that the size of the Logo is smaller than 0.75" (height or width).
- If the Logo will be reproduced in one color, you must use the one-color version. One-color representation of the Logo may be in any single color, although black, white, or PMS 532 are preferred. If the two-color version will be used, the correct colors are PMS 532 (blue) and PMS (1805).
- Logos may only be used by the member club or organization during the timeframe in which its USATF membership is current. Should the membership lapse the club or organization must cease use of the Logo.
- The Logo must be used in conjunction with the club or organization's name or logo. In other words, the logo cannot be used on its own on items such as websites, apparel, letterhead, and other promotional items.
- Logos may not be distributed to other clubs or organizations. Failure to follow the guidelines/restrictions may result in the club or organization's membership being revoked.

## **9.4 – PROCESSING CLUB MEMBERSHIPS**

Clubs apply for, and renew their club memberships using the online club application. This link is located on your Association page (on the National website), and on the Clubs page of the website. Once they have submitted their application or renewal, you will receive an e-mail alert that the club awaits your approval. The club will receive an e-mail confirming the receipt of their application.

### *How to Approve Club Applications*

In Association Club Management, an Association will see a list of their current clubs. Clubs awaiting application approval will be sorted to the top of the list. The last column will indicate whether the club needs approval, and whether it is a new club application or a renewal.

### **Steps to Approve an Application**

- Click on the EDIT link. This allows you to view all the information the club submitted and even make changes prior to approval. For new applications, the system automatically assigns the new club number. If you wish to change the club number to something different, you can make that change at this time. You cannot change the club number for a renewing club.
- Check to make sure a new club submission is actually a new club, instead of a renewal. You can do this by searching your Club Listing page(s) for a club with the same or similar name. (If you find that it is supposed to be a renewal, contact the National Office prior to approving.)
- Verify if the club is a Youth club. If it is, you will need to make sure the Club Contact listed on the application has passed a background check. You can do this by checking the list of Coaches and Volunteers In Good Standing, located on your Association page of the National website. (Background checks can take up to two weeks to process.)

- If the club contact did not fill in their Individual Membership number, you can search for that number and insert it at this time.
- If they have listed two different addresses (a street address and a PO Box address) you can edit the application to the PO Box address only to insure they receive their club mailing(s).
- Once you have gone through this checklist and are ready to approve, check the box at the top of the application that says, "I approve...", and then click the SAVE button. The club is now active in the system, and will receive an e-mail confirmation of their acceptance as an organizational/club member in your Association.

### *Entering Paper Applications*

If a club sends the Association a paper application for processing, the Association can enter the application/ renewal upon receipt, in Association Club Management.

#### **Steps to Enter a New Application**

- On the Club Listing page, click on the Add a New Club link.
- Enter all club information including the Practice Schedule.
- Enter credit card payment information, or if you received a check, check the box that says, Manual Payment. (Here you will enter the check # and amount paid.)
- Click the SUBMIT button.
- The club will now appear on your Club Listing as a club that needs to be approved. You will need to go through the steps to approve the club.

#### **Steps to Renew a Club**

- Click on the PAYMENTS link.
- Click on RENEW CLUB link.
- Make any necessary updates to the club's profile and practice schedule.
- Enter credit card payment information, or if you received a check, check the box that says, Manual Payment. (Here you will enter the check # and amount paid.)
- Click the SUBMIT button.
- The club will now appear on your Club Listing as a club that needs to be approved. You will need to go through the steps to approve the club.

## **9.5 – CLUB PRACTICE INSURANCE**

### *Overview*

An important benefit USATF provides to its member organizations (clubs) is General Liability Insurance coverage. Liability insurance provides coverage for certain types of lawsuits brought against the club, its officers, coaches and volunteers.

This coverage is extended to the regularly scheduled practices of member organizations (clubs) provided such practices are filed with USATF in advance and are supervised by a bona fide coach, and are not held at a home-based facility. Coaches must be current members of USATF and – for practices where youth athletes will be present – the coach/volunteer must have passed a criminal background check.

It is important to realize that this is not sport accident insurance. Injuries to athletes (who are members of USATF) during registered club practices or sanctioned events are covered under our sport accident policy (more information about this in the Individual Membership section).

Find additional club practice insurance information in the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website.

## **9.6 – YOUTH CLUB: CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROGRAM**

For the safety of our athletes, particularly our youth athletes, USA Track & Field has committed to providing a safe environment in which our athletes compete and train. We believe this is paramount to the success of all our programs.

As part of this commitment, USA Track & Field requires that all Youth Club coaches and Youth Club volunteers who come in contact with athletes during registered club practices or other club-related track and field activities, must be accepted into the USATF Registered Coaches Program.

*What does your Association need to do to help with the transition?*

- **For Association Webmasters:** Make sure that any information about the Background Check Program on your website is linked directly to the USATF Youth Club: Criminal Background Check Program webpage or place the Background Check logo on your site with a link to <http://www.usatf.org/about/programs/BackgroundChecks>.
- **For Association Club Contacts:** Be sure that all youth clubs have passed their background checks prior to approving them for membership each year.



## **CHAPTER 10 • SANCTION ADMINISTRATION**

### **10.1 – DEFINITION OF A SANCTION**

A USATF sanction is an official designation issued by USATF, through a local Association, which approves and licenses the holding of a competitive track & field, long distance running, or race walking event in the United States. The sanction is also a contract that evidences the event's commitment to follow the national (USATF) and international (IAAF) rules and regulations of the sport, and to provide a safe environment for the participants and spectators.

An event may obtain a USATF sanction by completing a USATF Application for Sanction, paying the requisite local and national sanctioning fees, and complying with the requirements of obtaining a sanction. Once the event has satisfied the sanction requirements, the event's application for sanction is reviewed for approval.

### **10.2 – TYPES OF SANCTIONS**

USATF and its Associations have the authority to grant two (2) types of domestic sanctions, general competition and elite.

#### *General Competition Sanction*

All athletics competitions, which fall under the jurisdiction of USATF, held within the United States which do not meet the requirements for obtaining an Elite sanction shall apply to receive a general competition sanction. Events wishing to obtain a General Competition sanction shall submit an Application for Sanction.

#### *Elite Sanction*

All Athletics competitions held within the United States that meet one or more of the following criteria may apply for an Elite sanction:

- Awards at least one individual prize greater than \$500;
- Subject to formal drug testing procedures; and
- Serves as a National Championship or selection competition (or trials competition), for an international team.

Events that meet one or more of the above criteria must submit an Elite Sanction Addendum, in addition to the Application for Sanction.

### **10.3 – EVENTS THAT CAN AND CANNOT BE SANCTIONED**

#### *Events That Can Be Sanctioned*

Sanctions may only be issued for competition in track & field, long distance running, and race walking that fall under the jurisdiction of USATF, and are conducted under IAAF and or USATF rules. {See USATF Article 2(D) and USOC Constitution Article IV (4)}

### *Events That Cannot Be Sanctioned*

- **Non-competitive events** such as “fun runs” and fund raising walks (in general, competitive events require that most, if not all, entrants be scored by time and place finish and applicable competition rules be followed). The liability insurance coverage provided for a competitive sanctioned event will, in most cases, extend to “fun runs” that are held in conjunction with the sanctioned event. *If an event cannot produce a set of results, as required by the Post Event Form, then we cannot sanction it.*
  - **Camps and clinics** conducted by clubs, organizations and private businesses cannot be sanctioned by USATF (and, therefore, cannot be covered under the USATF general liability insurance policy). The USATF general liability insurance policy will provide coverage for the following:
    - USATF National Development Committee camps and clinics;
    - USATF National Office activities; and
    - USATF Association “owned” clinics. For a clinic to be owned by an Association it must be administered by Association staff, officers or key volunteers (such as committee chairs). The Association must take direct responsibility for the conduct of the clinic, including the actions of all clinic instructors. For Association owned clinics, the Association President (or designee) must complete and submit the sanction application for review by the National Office.
- The aforementioned clinics can be registered with USATF National Office by using special clinic insurance forms. A \$25 fee is charged to all clinics and includes unlimited certificates of insurance.
- **Events that do not fall under the jurisdiction of USA Track & Field** (i.e., high school, college, Armed Forces, disabled and combined sport events) as they are sanctioned by other governing bodies such as state high school association, NCAA, NAIA, USA Wheelchair, USA Triathlon, etc.
  - **Events that use the words “Olympic” or “Olympics”** in their titles without permission from the USOC.
  - Events limited to wheelchairs.
  - Events limited to participants pushing strollers and baby joggers.
  - Snowshoe competitions.
  - Cross Country Skiing competitions.
  - Triathlon competitions.
  - Biathlon competitions.
  - Rollerblading competitions.
  - Extreme Sport competitions.



### **10.4 – BENEFITS OF A USATF SANCTION**

There are many benefits to obtaining a sanction, these include:

- **Increased prestige:** For many events, the USATF sanction improves the event’s public perception. A sanction tells athletes that an event is being run according to defined rules and that they have some recourse if prizes aren’t awarded. Sanctioned events shall use the USATF logo (upon agreeing to the USATF Event Designation Logo Guidelines and Restrictions) to promote the fact that the governing body has sanctioned the event and to evidence an affiliation with USATF and its programs.
- **Liability insurance:** Most governmental entities including cities, counties, state highway departments, parks and community centers require general liability insurance for all events conducted within their jurisdiction. The cost of a sanction is very inexpensive compared to the prices of most commercially available event insurance policies. It is important to know that events that are already insured may choose to waive the insurance coverage and pay a lower sanction fee.

**Medical insurance for athletes:** Any USATF member athlete who is injured while participating in a sanctioned event will be eligible for secondary medical insurance coverage for the injury. The

insurance not only provides valuable coverage to our members, but it serves as a valuable deterrent to lawsuits.

- **Records:** In general, for non-road events, a sanction is required for an official track & field record to be accepted. Additionally, only marks established in USATF sanctioned events and those events recognized by USATF (collegiate (NCAA) and high school (NHSSF) sanctioned events) are accepted for USA Outdoor and Indoor Track & Field Championship qualifying purposes. There are some exceptions to this rule, however.
- **Resolving disputes:** If requested, USATF may act as a mediator in disputes between members and sanctioned events.
- **Promotion:** Sanctioned events may be included in calendars published at the local and national levels, as appropriate. Each Association may provide additional benefits to its sanctioned events.\*

## **10.5 – PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

To ensure that USATF coordinates an efficient and effective sanction program (“program”) it is imperative that the Associations and National Office work collaboratively to service the events. At the Association level, communications with local event organizers, processing of timely sanction applications, and remittance to the National Office are essential to the success of the program. Note: For the remainder of this section we will use “forms” to reference all of the applications (Application for Sanction, Elite Sanction addendum) and forms (Request for Certificate of Liability Insurance, Waiver of Liability Insurance, Post Event Form) that are used to facilitate the USATF sanction program.

### *Distribution of Sanction Forms to Events*

It is suggested that Associations send all previously sanctioned events an email at least four to six months before the event. The sanction email should reference:

- The Application for Sanction with instructions;
- The General Liability Insurance Program brochure;
- A Request for Certificate of Liability Insurance form; and
- And any other necessary Association information.

When needed, the sanction email may also include an Elite Sanction Addendum and/or a Waiver of Liability Insurance form.

It is also suggested that Associations develop a database of events that have not previously obtained a sanction and send them an informative email about how to sanction an event online. Regional running-related magazines and club newsletters are great sources for obtaining data for this purpose.

### *Processing of Sanction Applications*

Associations will review the online submission through the Association Management Area. The Associations should review the online sanction application to make sure all necessary information is included and legible.

### *General guidelines*

- Sanctions need to be processed minimally once a week (recommended no later than Wednesday of each week)
- Upon receipt, special attention should be given to each Request for Certificate of Liability and more specifically to the date each certificate is needed. If the date the certificate is needed is within 10 business days, the Sanction should be approved in the system immediately as long as all requirements are met.



- If an event is waiving the liability insurance benefit they must also submit a Waiver of Liability Insurance form and a reciprocal insurance certificate naming USATF, its employees, directors, assigns, and USATF Certified Officials, as an additional insured. If these documents are not included, the event should be notified immediately and instructed that their Application for Sanction cannot be processed until all required paperwork is received.

### *Sanction Fees*

The National Office has established a national sanction fee schedule for issuing of sanctions to events. This money becomes part of the general operating fund of the National Office and the fees are then used to offset the costs of the sanctioning program including insurance premiums, forms, and other administrative costs. National sanction fees are based primarily on the number of entrants in the events.

The following national sanction fee schedule became effective for events held on or after November 1, 2016:

Number of	USATF National Fee
1-100	\$60.00
101-250	\$95.00
251-500	\$185.00
501-1,000	\$370.00
1,001-2,000	\$615.00
2,001-4,000	\$1,110.00
4,001-6,000	\$1,600.00
6,001-10,000	\$3,075.00
10,001 - 15,000	\$4,900.00
15,001 - 25,000	\$7,400.00
25,001 - 35,000	\$9,850.00
35,001 +	\$12,300.00

Some special circumstances may exist that result in special fees, such as:

- Junior Olympic preliminary & developmental meets pay \$50 per meet as a National Sanction Fee regardless of the number of entrants. Association, Regional and National Junior Olympic meets pay the applicable National Sanction Fee as described above.
- Series of events may elect to pay on a “per event” basis or for the total number of entrants across the entire series. By definition, a series is three or more scheduled events at the same location conducted by the same event management. In this case, entrants are defined as entrants in each event (i.e., one person is competing in separate events in a series is counted as a participant in each event).
- Dual events held on the same day and at the same site may elect to determine the National Sanction Fee based on the combined entrants in both events. To further explain, if an event includes a marathon at 8 a.m. and a 5 km at 9 a.m., then the number of entrants in both events can be considered as one to determine the National Sanction Fee.
- Except as described above, an entrant is defined as an individual who enters the event regardless the number of times she/he competes (i.e., a sprinter in a track meet is counted once even if competing in both the 100m and 200m dashes).
- If an event is canceled, 10% of the National Sanction Fee will be retained to cover administrative costs.
- Special fee structures and sanction application requirements are available for events that utilize



other insurance programs, such as that offered by the RRCA and the YMCA. See section 12.7 of this chapter for more information.

- Late fees may also be applied to sanction applications and certificate requests that are not made in a timely manner.

Below is the late fee structure:

Sanction Application Late fees:

Applications Received 29 days – 16 days prior to event = 10% increase in the sanction fee

Applications Received 15 days – 8 days prior to event = 25% increase in the sanction fee

Applications Received 7 days - 4 days prior to event = 50% increase in the sanction fee

Applications Received 3 days or less prior to event = 100% increase in the sanction fee

Late fees for Certificate of Insurance Requests:

Requests Received 7 days – 4 days prior to event = \$25 fee

Requests Received 3 days or less prior to event = \$50 fee

Local Associations may also set their own sanction fees. Local sanction fees must be reasonable and non-discriminatory. Associations have the option of waiving local sanction fees. Local sanction fees are retained by the Association to offset administrative costs and provide operating revenue for programs and services.

*Post Event Processing*

*Post-Event Report Form*

Post event forms should be submitted through the online sanction system. Twenty four (24) hours after the date of the event, the event organizer will receive an email from [sanctions@usاتف.org](mailto:sanctions@usاتف.org) with instructions on how to complete the post event report. Information such as the actual number of participants and the results of the event are required in order to complete post event report.

After the event, the event director must return if applicable, the Application for the Recognition of a Road Race Performance to the appropriate person (either the state record keeper or the Long Distance Running Record Keeper). The link to the Application for a Record form can be found at the top of the online post event report. The completed application for a record should be filled out and forwarded along with any requirements outlined on the form.

If the event requires a refund of part of the sanction fee or has submitted additional fees, the online sanction system will automatically calculate the refund or additional fees owed based on the final number of entrants in the event. Any transactions made via credit card will be automatically processed through the online sanction system. For those that initially made payments via check you should expect the refund to be sent from the USATF National Office in the form of a check.

*Incident Report*

If an incident occurred at any USATF sanctioned event (i.e. injury or death), an Incident Report form must be submitted to the National Office. If the incident involves an athlete, a copy of his/her event entry and signed USATF waiver should be included with the Incident Report form. In the case of bodily injury, statements should be obtained from witnesses, officials and on-site medical personnel.

If the event organizer is sued, all of the above must be submitted as well as a copy of the legal papers served. This should be done within forty-eight (48) hours of the papers being served.

In the event a sanctioned event incurs a claim wherein the event director and/or organizer are unable to produce the required waiver for the participant, official or volunteer involved in the claim, the event director and/or organizer will have a \$10,000 deductible on the claim, payable to USATF.

## **10.6 – ONLINE CALENDAR AND SANCTIONS**

### **Directions for Event Directors**

#### **Add event to Calendar**

Event directors must submit a sanction request through the online sanction system.

Quick steps are provided below:

- Click “add an event” to start the application process
- Enter the event information
- Facility: starting location of your event
- Choose your event type
- Choose the age range for your event
- Enter the projected number of participants
- Enter the event’s website
- Enter the event organizer’s information
- Check the Public Contact box if the public contact and event organizer are the same
- Enter the event’s timing company information
- Enter the distance and type of events being contested-then click Add
- In the Description box you may type in any additional information for your event that may be of interest to the participants
- Click “yes” if you would like to sanction the event
- If the event is a series (meaning 3 or more events in the same location), check the series box and follow instructions
- For a series, you will add the first event of the series to the calendar. After clicking “add this event to the calendar” your page will refresh with the same information. Here you will edit the dates for the second event in your series. Repeat this process until you have entered the last event in the series. On the last event of the series you will uncheck the series button and finish my clicking “add this event to the calendar”. You will receive email confirmations for each event in the series. Each event in the series will receive an event ID and password.

#### **Sanction the event**

Following the calendar addition steps, event organizers will be sent to page 2 of 6 in the sanctioning process. In the case where an event organizer doesn’t sanction the event while completing the calendar entry, the event organizer will be able to log back into their event to complete the sanction process. Event organizers will receive an automated email containing an event ID and password, which are case sensitive. To sanction an event that has already been added to the calendar, the event organizer will need to log into the event with the event ID and password by clicking the “edit/sanction an event” button on the sanction homepage. Once logged in you will click the “edit this year’s calendar listing” button then scroll down to click “I would like to sanction this event” to begin the process.

Below are the steps to completing the sanction application:

- Step 1 of 6: Enter the projected number of finishers. Check event sanction type (event sanction or sanction series). Confirm if the event organizer is a member organization or not. Finally click next.
  - If this event is part of a series, you will enter the event IDs for each event in the series in the field provided.
- Step 2 of 6: Check all boxes that apply, click next.

- Step 3 of 6: Check the box beside each section to indicate that the terms and conditions have been read.
  - Type signature, click next.
- Step 4 of 6: Click yes if you are in need of a third party certificate for your event. Click no if you do not need a third party certificate.
  - Click next.
- Step 5 of 6: Fees are listed and payment information is required either by credit card (MasterCard, Visa, and Discover).
- Step 6 of 6: Confirmation page

## **10.7 – PROVIDED BY SANCTION**

### *Waiver of Liability Insurance*

In general, event organizers are added to USATF's General Liability Insurance policy for the conduct of the sanctioned event. Events that already have sufficient liability insurance through another source may elect to waive the USATF liability insurance and receive a reduction in the National Sanction Fee.

The National Sanction Fee for events that waive the insurance shall be 25% of the listed National Sanction Fee, to a maximum of \$1000.00. This means that an event with 10,000 finishers that is waiving the liability insurance would pay \$1000.00.

### *Event Submission Requirements*

It is important to know that an Application for Sanction for an event that is waiving the liability insurance benefit will not be valid until the event complies with the following:

- An Application for Sanction is submitted;
- A signed copy of the Waiver of Liability Insurance form is submitted to USATF; and
- A valid Certificate of Insurance naming USATF, its employees, directors, assigns, and USATF Certified Officials as additional insured is submitted to USATF.

Insurance limits on these Certificates must be minimally the same as USATF's insurance and must specifically state that there is coverage for "claims arising from participants in athletic events."

### *Multiple Events/Single Certificate of Insurance*

If the organizer wishes to obtain sanctions for multiple events during a calendar year, it may submit a single Certificate of Insurance (naming USA Track & Field and the Association as additional insured's as described above) for all of the organizer's USATF sanctioned events during the year. This certificate must be specific as to event names, locations and dates. The organizer must also complete a separate Waiver of Liability Insurance form for each sanctioned event. Remember, each of the events is not sanctioned until both a valid Certificate of Insurance and Waiver of Liability Insurance form have been submitted and approved.

### *Liability Insurance*

Each year the National Office provides an insurance brochure that details the current coverage, limits and details of the General Liability Insurance program. The information below provides information available at the time of printing the Association Manual. For the most updated information please reference the current brochure online on the USATF website.

### Other coverage notes:

Organizers must obtain waivers of liability from all participants, including volunteers. These waivers must be in the form provided and approved by USATF (see the waivers available at on the USATF website). Failure to obtain written waivers may reduce or void your coverage. Event organizers shall retain old waivers of liability in accordance with the statute of limitations applicable to each specific state where the USATF sanctioned event/activity takes place. Note that in the case of minors, the statute clock may not begin until the minor reaches the age of majority.

In the event a sanctioned event incurs a claim wherein the event director and/or organizer are unable to produce the required waiver for the participant, official or volunteer involved in the claim, the event director and/or organizer will have a \$10,000 deductible on the claim, payable to USATF.

In the event a sanctioned event is conducted on property not intended for the purpose of the sanctioned event (e.g. a golf course) and such use causes excessive property damage (at USATF's sole discretion), the event director and/or organizer will have up to a \$10,000 deductible on the property damage claim, payable to USATF.

In the event a sanctioned event fails to abide by USATF Rules and Regulations, including any USATF sanction regulations, USATF may impose a deductible against the event director and/or organizer for any claim incurred against that sanctioned event. A deductible amount of \$2,500 may be assessed for the first offense by the event director and/or organizer. A deductible amount of \$5,000 may be assessed for the second offense by the event director and/or organizer. A deductible amount of \$10,000 may be assessed for the third, and subsequent, offense by the event director and/or organizer. Additionally, following the third offense by the event director and/or organizer, USATF may refuse to sanction any future events for the event director and/or organizer, at USATF's sole discretion. Offenses will be attributed to event directors and/or organizers irrespective of the sanctioned event involved; therefore, offenses will be cumulative and do not need to be of the same type or need to occur all within the same sanctioned event.

### *Adding a Third Party as an Additional Insured*

If a third party, like the host city or school, requests to be covered under the event's insurance from claims by participants, the third party must be listed as an additional insured on the Certificate of Insurance. This provides the third party with limited protection should the third party be sued as the result of the actions of the event organizer. It does not provide the third party with any protection for its own actions. For example, the USATF insurance would not provide coverage to the city if a city employee drove a maintenance vehicle onto the racecourse and injured participants.

**Food and Alcohol:** If the third party will be serving food or alcohol at the event, this raises special risks related to product liability and liquor liability. These are risks that neither USATF nor the event organizer should accept. To ensure that we do not accept these risks, the third party is required to provide proof of its own insurance. This is only necessary if the third party wants to be listed as an additional insured and will be serving food or alcohol at the event. A certificate naming USATF, its subsidiaries and their respective employees, directors, assigns and USATF Certified Officials is required.

**Obtaining a Certificate of Insurance:** If a third party certificate of insurance is required, the request shall be submitted through the online sanction program. The event organizer should use its event ID and password to log into the event and click "add 3<sup>rd</sup> party certificates". Once the third party information has been entered, click "Next" to submit the request.

**Special Wording on Certificates:** Some cities and/or municipalities request special language be included on the Certificate of Insurance. In most cases, this is not a problem. However, special wording that increases the policy premium or modifies the terms of the policy will not be approved. Special wording requests should accompany the Request for Certificate of Liability form. The special wording request should be received at the National Office no later than three weeks before the Certificate is needed. (These requests sometimes require approval from the insurance carrier and this may take time.) It is not appropriate to inform an event that we can obtain special wording, even if it has been done in the past. (The insurance company may have changed its policies or procedures since the last similar request.)

**Deadline for Requests of Certificates of Insurance:** In order to allow sufficient time for review, preparation and emailing of certificates, sanction applications should be submitted no later than thirty days before it is needed. Sanctions and certificates can be issued on a last minute “emergency” basis, if necessary, with payment of additional late fee(s). See late fees noted above.



## **CHAPTER 11 • CLUBS & REPRESENTATION**

### **11.1 – INTRODUCTION**

Clubs are organizations of athletes and others who participate in USATF programs as teams or individuals representing clubs. There shall be various types of USATF clubs, based on the types of programs and purposes they serve. Clubs may have more than one purpose. All clubs are considered Association (local) clubs and shall become members by joining the Association in which they are located – all clubs are basically limited to their local geographic area in recruiting members who can compete in championships representing them.

Clubs are classified as follows:

- **Competitive:** Clubs that primarily prepare athletes for competitive opportunities shall be referred to as competitive clubs.
- **Affiliated:** Clubs that primarily stage events or provide competitive opportunities to the public shall be referred to as affiliated clubs.
- **Training:** Clubs that exist to provide non-collegiate athletes insurance coverage when training at an educational institution's facilities shall be referred to as training clubs.
- **Elite development clubs:** USATF may designate member clubs as Elite Development Clubs. These clubs may provide coaching, training groups, facilities, travel to events, financial assistance, stipends, or other forms of assistance. Elite development clubs shall receive additional benefits and information from USATF to assist them with elite development and may be charged additional dues and fees for the additional benefits.

Apart from these classifications, some clubs identify exclusively with a single aspect or division of the sport. Among the primary reasons a club will be formed are to allow kids to compete in Junior Olympics track & field or cross country programs, to allow open competitors to receive support for training, to form long distance or cross country teams, to compete exclusively in Masters competitors, or to form a specific event area training group. There are a select number of clubs which do not compete at all – they were formed to support, promote, and/or own an event. Disputes over club names shall be resolved through USATF's grievance process. USATF or involved parties may institute these proceedings when two clubs choose the same or confusingly similar names (except if both clubs concur), when a club uses a name that could reasonably be interpreted to refer to a national team, when a club uses a name that causes public confusion with USATF-related sponsorship or advertising, or a club uses a trademark or service mark of USATF or the USOC.

### **11.2 – RULES ON REPRESENTATION**

An athlete may compete as a representative of a local club, educational institution, or other organization, and additionally may be listed as competing for the club and/or a sponsor, subject to USOC regulations. The club and athlete must be USATF members in good standing. Only an athlete, or his/her legal guardian, may give notice of a change of representation. An athlete member who wishes to change representation shall notify the Association, in writing or online, prior to the effective date of the change. A fee for change may apply.



Due to differing levels of support local clubs are able to offer, open and Masters athletes are more or less free to transfer their USATF membership to the Association of another club and be a member of that club. However, there are limitations on the types of competitions the athlete can participate in and score for the club if he or she chooses to do that. Among these are the National Club Championships, which has severe limitations on residency and citizenship exceptions. Such limitations are part of the USATF Rules.

### *Transfers*

In order to transfer membership from a club in one Association to another club in a different Association, an adult athlete age 19 years and older first completes a request on the USATF website. USATF then notifies the affected Associations and the athlete. Then the athlete must contact his or her new membership chair and show that he or she has not competed for the old club for the previous three months, unless the athlete claims and is granted a waiver due to events beyond the athlete's control.

There are exceptions to the above process:

- An athlete who is a member of a club who wishes to compete as an undergraduate student for a college or university (two- or four-year institution) is automatically released without notice by the club when the college season begins, to compete for that college or university in open competition. The athlete shall similarly be automatically released without notice to the school immediately after the academic eligibility period ends, to represent the club of the athlete's choice.
- An athlete member on active duty in the United States Armed Forces may, upon receiving permission from the local membership committee, represent in open competition the military organization or the Athletics club to which the athlete belongs, or both. Any points scored by that athlete shall count for the Athletics club, except where a point trophy is advertised to be contested by a military organization.
- An athlete may compete as a member of a club in race walking and for another club in another Athletics discipline, provided the two clubs or organizations involved do not both participate in race walking. For example, an athlete may race walk for one club which may or may not have a running program, and run for another club that has no race walking program. The athlete shall have responsibility for giving proper notice of a change of representation. In the event of a dispute among clubs, educational institutions, organizations, and an athlete regarding a transfer of representation, the athlete's written designation of representation shall be determinative.

### **11.3 – YOUTH CLUB PARAMETERS**

A Youth athlete must compete in the Association in which they permanently reside. 'Permanent Residency' is defined as the residence of the youth athlete's parent/legal guardian. Proof of residency can be provided by the parent's or guardian's tax statements or utility bills at the place of residency.

An exception is provided for minor children whose parents or guardians share custody at residences in different Associations. Youth athletes can compete in their Association of permanent residence as a member of a club and represent the club by wearing a team uniform and participating on a relay. Participation of relay teams shall be limited to those clubs that hold a valid membership in USATF, and where the athlete appears in the on-line database as a member of the club. Uniform and relay rules also apply. During a track & field meet, team scoring can be tallied. Any member of a club in the USATF database may score for that club, provided the club has followed the proper entry procedures. If a particular relay is the athlete's only event in the meet, they must still be entered in the meet as a "roster" athlete and pay any required entry fee. In cross country running, all members of a club listed on the team declaration roster at the Association finals are eligible to compete on the club's team (minimum of 5, maximum of 8) in the next round of qualifications up to and including the



National Championships, so long as the team qualifies. In order to declare a team, a club must enter a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 athletes by the entry deadline. The composition of the team at each round can change if you submit a change form at packet pickup at least two hours prior to the race, and any athlete changed must be listed on the declaration roster.

#### **11.4 – OPEN AND MASTERS CLUB PARAMETERS**

Open competition is open to anyone ages 14-and-over for girls and women and 16-and-over for boys and men. If the competition is open, all of the parameters for an event must be the same for all of the entrants. This means that only one short hurdle race per gender and one longer hurdle race per gender is contested, one steeplechase distance and barrier height is contested per gender, and only open implements are used in weight events. There is team scoring in most Masters track & field and long distance running events at the Association, regional, and national levels. Athletes score points for their team within their division. Relays and cross country and road running teams are sometimes more complicated, as a small club attempts to fill up the required number of relay members or LDR scorers, and may have to dip into its pool of younger members. In doing so, the age on the first day of a meet of the youngest member shall determine the age division of a team in a team event or relay. That individual remains in their actual age division for individual events.

#### **RACING TEAM**

There are both club and non-club relays permitted at many Masters' meets, including championships. A club relay team is composed of eligible athletes all members of and competing for the same club. Non-club relays can be teams composed of all members of a single Association, or all members of a single region, or unrestricted. Club relay records will be maintained separately from non-club records. Club and non-club relay teams compete in separate divisions. At Association, regional, and national track & field championships, and all other meets, each relay team must meet one of the definitions above, or be a foreign national team as guest competitors in the non-club Division. A team meeting any of the above definitions may set a Masters' record. Team championships are also held in Masters race walking events held outside of the track & field championships. They are conducted in ten-year age divisions for men and women. Any number of members for each team may be entered, the number of declared members shall be up to five (5), and three (3) individuals shall score.

Team championships in Masters cross country shall be conducted in 10-year age divisions, 40+, 50+, 60+ and 70+, for men and women. Team championships in these same divisions may be conducted in other Masters long distance events. An 80+ division for men and/or women may be added at the discretion of the Games Committee. The maximum number of entries per team shall be unlimited. In Association championships, the maximum number of entries for an open or Masters team, and the number of members of each team to finish for scoring may be determined by the Games Committee.

Team scoring for Masters cross country shall be as follows: M40+ and M50+ five (5) individuals shall score with a maximum of eight (8) individuals declared per team and M60+ and above, and all women's teams three (3) individuals shall score with a maximum of five (5) individuals declared per team.

Team scoring for Masters road racing championships shall be as follows: All teams, men and women, in all 10-year age divisions, three (3) individuals shall score with a maximum of five (5) individuals declared per team. Competitors in a track & field championship must be current members of USATF. Only U.S. citizens shall be allowed to win USATF medals and other Championship awards, or to score on a team.

Teams shall represent current member clubs of USATF, verified through the National Office. USATF Association, Regional, or National “all-star” teams are not eligible to compete in Masters Long Distance Running Team competition. Team members shall be affiliated with the club they are representing on their USATF membership record prior to entering the competition. Championship patches may be awarded to the declared members of the winning team in each team division.

### **11.5 – TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Selected events have no team scoring.

These include:

- USA open indoor and outdoor track & field championships
- Junior Olympics track & field (scoring is part of Junior Olympics cross country)
- Olympic Trials competitions

Some sport committees have a variable policy. If team scoring is included as a part of the bid for the event, a Men’s or Women’s Long Distance Running Championship can have team scoring. Absent a bid, a championship is not obligated to provide team awards or perform team scoring.

These committees include:

- Men’s Track & Field
- Women’s Track & Field
- Men’s Long Distance Running
- Women’s Long Distance Running
- Mountain/Ultra/Trail Running

All other sport committees mandate team scoring for championships.

These include:

- Cross Country
- Masters Long Distance Running
- Masters Track & Field
- Race Walking

The two national club championships employ special team championship stipulations. The intent of the program for local (Association) clubs has always been to encourage the creation and nurturing of clubs which serve the athletes in their local area, building strong support programs and networks in a number of critical sport and life components. Those rules are detailed below.

Association membership chairs will receive the most requests for team changes just prior to major team championships. Make sure you understand the rules for each type of championship – otherwise you could be changing an athlete to a team for which he or she is ineligible to score. Don’t approve (for example) all of the open athletes in your Association to compete for clubs outside your Association if it is ever your desire to have a club for open athletes in your area. The same goes for masters. Use youth as an example – they can’t compete for teams outside their Association, so youth clubs are developed to support them.

### **11.6 – CLUB COUNCIL AND NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

#### ***Club Council Responsibilities***

The primary responsibility of the Council is to work with National staff to produce a national and regional championship series in track & field, cross country running, and road running. It is also charged with nurturing the club system by preparing a policy for elite development club criteria and benefits for Board approval.

It will also formulate a policy for ranking clubs in terms of assistance and national programs. It shall specify the criteria for clubs to attain each ranking. The Council holds a business meeting at the Annual Meeting and often holds information and club-building meetings and exercises at the national club championships.

### ***ELITE DEVELOPMENT CLUB***

#### ***Club Council Makeup***

One coach or administrator and one athlete from each currently registered Elite Development Club (EDC) and Team USA Training Center (TUSA) have seats on the Council, along with the following persons or their designated representatives: USATF President, Men's Track & Field chair, Women's Track & Field chair, Race Walking chair, Development Group Coordinator, Long Distance Running Division chair, Men's Long Distance Running chair, Women's Long Distance Running chair, Cross Country Council chair, Associations Committee chair, and RRCA President. Three at-large seats can also be named by the chair.

#### ***Elite Development Clubs***

The Elite Development Club (EDC) Program is intended to support the efforts of USA Track & Field and the USATF Club Council to develop and support nationally and internationally competitive athletes by increasing the number of year-round training environments available to U.S. athletes once they leave our school-based programs. By increasing the number of promising athletes who continue to compete in our sport following their high school and college careers, we enlarge the talent pool from which our future stars will emerge. The "Elite Development Club" designation identifies clubs that have demonstrated the commitment, resources, and record of developing athletes to the elite level. The "Elite Development Club" designation is also intended to enhance the ability of high-level USATF clubs to marshal community and corporate support for their mission of elite athlete development.

Additional information on the EDC program is located in the Essentials for Officers section under Associations on the USATF website.

#### ***Club Cross Country***

The club cross country annual festival of races takes place on a biddable site basis (meaning the date can change depending on when the successful bidder is intent on putting it on), but is generally held the weekend after the conclusion of the USATF Annual Meeting, on the same date as the National Junior Olympics are traditionally scheduled for. It has successfully been held on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, on Thanksgiving weekend, and in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

#### ***Club Track & Field***

Most successful when it is held in New York, the Club Track & Field Championships is still an important focus for many clubs across the country.



## CHAPTER 12 • OFFICIALS

### 12.1 – INTRODUCTION

Officials play an important role in making thousands of events run smoothly. From working national championships to officiating high-school track meets, officials are essential for maintaining the highest levels of integrity at all levels of competition. This section offers resources for current officials, as well as those seeking certification.

USA Track & Field provides a national program for the training and certifying officials for the sports of track and field, race walking and long-distance running. This is administered locally by USATF Associations through a Certification Chair and committee structure.

USATF Officials adhere to a Code of Ethics and Performance Guidelines which promotes an athlete centered proactive philosophy of officiating and service to the sport. Officials seek to provide objective oversight to ensure that each athlete is given an equal and fair opportunity to compete.

The National Track and Field Officials Committee is committed to promoting racial and gender diversity. This is being achieved through an active program of recruitment and creating increased opportunities for major officiating responsibilities, particularly for previously under-represented groups, in all event officiating skill areas.

### 12.2 – CERTIFICATION

#### *How to Become Certified*

To become a USATF Certified Track and Field Official one must:

1. Be a current year member of USATF.
2. Complete a New Officials Certification, or Recertification Application Form.
3. Make payment of the certification fee to your certification chair (a \$20.00 national fee, plus any additional Association-imposed fee).
4. Complete the appropriate rules review (open-book test).
5. Complete SafeSport training.
6. Complete the background check.
7. Provide a current photo.
8. Complete any additional requirements established by your association

Note: a current USATF membership number is required in order to receive credit for the SafeSport Training and the background check

#### *Certification Levels*

Training and certification of officials is central to USATF's goal of ensuring fair and safe competitive opportunities for athletes. The training and certification processes promote a serious and professional approach to officiating and demonstrate an official's commitment to excellence. As an

official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices, and additional training, USATF recognizes this skill development through progressive levels of certification: Apprentice to Association to National to Master.

New officials will now start off at the Apprentice level. We've designed the Apprentice level so that new officials can spend time learning a number of events and being exposed to many different areas of track & field. We want to make sure that we're doing all we can going forward to train well rounded officials.



As an official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices, and additional training, USATF recognizes this skill development through progressive levels of certification: Association to National to Master.

**Association:** After serving as an Apprentice level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to Association level. Association level officials should be able to take on more responsibility in home association meets. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit a letter of recommendation from a National or Master level official, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book Association level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining Association level certification.

**National:** After serving as an Association level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to National level. A National level official should be able to head up an event at a major meet in an Association and work as an official at national championships. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit letters of recommendation from two Master level officials or one Master level and one National level official, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book National level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining National level certification.

**Master:** After serving as a National level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to Master level. A Master level official should be able to serve as a head official at major regional and national meets. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit letters of recommendation from three Master level officials, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book Master level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining Master level certification.

To better differentiate certain disciplines, we've split the following disciplines off from the main system of certification levels. These disciplines are certified using a number of grades, customized for each discipline. In addition, these disciplines have custom requirements for certification.

- Referees - All Types
- Combined Event Coordinator

- Technical Manager
- Electronic Recorder
- Electronic Measurer
- Electronic Manager

#### *Certification and Skill Ratings Valid Only for Current Olympiad*

All certification levels are revisited each 4-Year Olympiad. Renewal at any level is based on recent officiating activity and demonstrated competency during the preceding 4-year Olympiad. Thus, if an official has not been active or her/his skill level at a given officiating skill area has not remained to the standard for that level, she/he may have either the overall rating reduced one level or the rating for one or more skill areas reduced one level during the Olympiad recertification process. Retired officials are nominated for “Emeritus” status in recognition of their considerable contribution to the sport.

#### *Eligibility for Officiating National and International Meets*

Only those holding the “National” or “Master” level certifications are considered to be eligible to officiate in Championship meets conducted by USATF outside of the individual’s home association. Generally, competition officials for major events are selected by a Selection Committee which includes representatives of USATF Standing Sport Committees, the Officials Committee and a representative of the local organizing committee.

#### *Officials Serve without Expectation of Compensation*

Officials are in service to the sport. All officials serve without expectation of compensation, although Championship meets are expected to provide free or reduced cost lodging and meals and other forms of appreciation to those who officiate at the competition.

#### *Association Certification Chairs*

To learn more about your local certification program, please contact your Association Certification Chair.

Please visit the USATF website to learn more about certification, rules and training of an official. to learn more about certification, rules and training of an official.





## CHAPTER 13 • COACHING EDUCATION

### 13.1 – INTRODUCTION

The coaching education program provides educational opportunities for all levels of coaches, from grass roots to the elite level. The program is comprised of four progressive levels, each of which has the following components:

#### Sport Science

Extensive instruction in sport science is covered in order to provide a scientific basis of understanding for rational development of technique and training programs. The sport science portion has been developed by the American Coaching Effectiveness Program (ACEP) and the USATF National Coaching Education Committee. It includes sport psychology, pedagogy, and sports medicine.

#### Technical, Event-Specific Instruction

Throws, jumps, sprints/hurdles, and endurance events are all covered at the basic level in this school. Event-specific instruction is progressive in nature. Consequently, at Levels 2 and 3, each event is covered in greater depth and detail than the previous level.

#### Hands-on Training

Experience is the best teacher. Minimum standards of practical experience are expected of participants at each level.

### 13.2 – EDUCATION LEVELS

There are four levels of Coaching Education based on various criteria and experience:

- **Fundamental** – An introductory course entitled Coaching Track and Field is offered in conjunction with the National Federation of High Schools, is a grass roots overview of the sport and coaching.  
*(Coaches do not need to complete this course to enroll in a Level 1)*
- **Level 1** - Basic knowledge course that emphasizes rules, basic mechanics, and teaching progressions.
- **Level 2** - More in-depth training in an event specific group (sprints/hurdles/relays, endurance, jumps, throws, combined events and youth).
- **Level 3** - Very high-level seminar structure educational experience in a specific event area.

### 13.3 – INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

If you are interested in teaching at a Level 1 school, you must complete the Instructor Training Course (ITC). ITC schools are typically held in conjunction with Level 2 schools.

#### Requirements

- Must have completed at least two areas of the Level 2 program.
- Must have a minimum of five years of Track & Field/Cross Country coaching experience at a high



school, college or USATF registered club. Only Track & Field coaching experience gained after the age of 21 will be considered.

- Must submit three references.
- Attend the ITC (see application process below).
- Plan and present lessons using a variety of media as well as techniques from differing event groups.

#### *Benefits*

- Recognition as a USATF Level 1 Instructor
- USATF coaching education instructor's materials
- Eligibility to direct and/or teach at Level 1 coaching education schools

### **13.4 – ABOUT ITC SCHOOLS**

Instructor Training Courses are typically three-day courses held in conjunction with Level 2 schools. The course consists of classroom instruction as well as hands-on training. Attendance at all sessions is required. The cost for an ITC school varies by location .

#### *How to Apply*

To apply, please complete the Level 2 – Event Specific application and select “Instructor Training Course” or “Level 2 - Event Specific & ITC” as your preferred category.

### **13.5 – HOSTING A LEVEL 1 SCHOOL**

Visit the Coaches section under the Programs tab of the USATF website for information on hosting a Level 1 school.

### **13.6 – OTHER OPPORTUNITES**

#### *Special Programs*

USATF will occasionally sponsor or support special clinics or programs. Check the website regularly for various programs and special clinics offered by the Coaching Education program.

#### *Additional Information*

Additional information on Coaching Education programs, including the current calendar of schools, can be found on the USATF website.



## **CHAPTER 14 – COURSE CERTIFICATION**

### **14.1 – DEFINITION OF A CERTIFIED COURSE**

#### *What are USATF-Certified Courses?*

A USATF-certified course is a road race course whose distance has been certified for accuracy. Courses must be certified and sanctioned (see Chapter 12) for any road running performance to be accepted as a record or to be nationally ranked. Furthermore, running a race on a certified course allows you to accurately compare your time to performances run on other certified courses because you can be sure the distances were the same.

#### *How to Get Your Course Certified*

The easiest way to have your course certified is to hire someone who is already skilled at measuring courses for USATF certification.

You can search our database of known course measurers on our website.

Alternatively, you can measure it yourself. In either case, you may need to contact the USATF Road Course Certifier for your state. This person can refer you to qualified measurers that you might hire. Or, if you choose to measure the course yourself, the Certifier can provide guidance to help you through the process, and when you are finished, you will need to send paperwork to your state Certifier.

#### *USATF Road Course Certifiers*

The USATF Road Course Certifier for your state can refer you to experienced measurers in your area that you may hire to get your course certified, or can provide guidance if you choose to measure a course yourself.

For anyone who wishes to measure road courses for certification, our complete Course Measurement Manual is provided online at [www.usatf.org/events/courses/certification/manual](http://www.usatf.org/events/courses/certification/manual). After measuring according to the procedures in this manual, the measurer must submit complete data and application forms and a detailed map of the course to the Certifier in the state where the course is located (most certifiers charge a fee for reviewing the application, up to a maximum of \$30). The certifier will either approve the course or, if the measurer made a mistake, notify the measurer and explain how to fix it. Once a course is approved, the certifier will assign it a course ID number, and prepare a certificate which is combined with the course map to become the official documentation for this certified course.

### **14.2 – COURSE MEASURING VERSUS COURSE CERTIFICATION**

Just like measuring a track must be done using accurate surveying techniques accepted by planners, engineers, and the rule makers of the sport, a road course must be measured using a

specific technique to guarantee accuracy. This involves riding a calibrated bicycle along the shortest possible route of the course, and calculating the distance traveled. This constitutes the actual measurement of the course.

However, this does not constitute certification. A surprising number of errors in calculations are made, and some parameters must be provided concerning complicated courses and the route followed. Therefore, the measurer must prepare a document showing the course details, including an overall course map and smaller inset maps showing particularly technical locations on the course and how they were measured. On the numbers side, show all of your calculations, including how and where you calibrated the bicycle counter, the statistics of your ride(s) over the course, and your re-calibration of the bicycle counter after each measurement. This is then submitted to the certifier for your state, who may not reside in your state, but is an accepted expert of the RRTC. Once that individual accepts your paperwork, your course is certified.

### **14.3 – WHO CAN MEASURE A COURSE**

Anyone can measure a course. They must have the proper equipment, which includes a bicycle which will accommodate a counter, the counter itself – a Jones Counter specifically designed to fit on the hub of your front tire wheel (go to <http://www.jonescounter.com/> for information) – and a course relatively free of traffic. NOTE: a GPS counter – while of significant value in helping determine your route and backing up (in your own mind) your calculations – is not a valid measurement tool for road course certification. It is a valid way for you to locate marks later, provided you have an instrument of sufficient computing power. Basic automobile GPS devices do not have such capabilities.

### **14.4 – HOW TO MEASURE A COURSE**

Visit the online manual for course measurement and certification procedures in the Course Certification section on the USATF website.

### **14.5 – DATABASE OF CERTIFIED COURSES**

Maps of all certified courses are available online. Measurers should be aware that their maps will be posted on the Internet. Runners who are thinking of running a race may view its map at this site. And race directors who are thinking of hiring a particular measurer may view maps that the measurer has produced.

#### *Duration of certification*

Because courses often degrade over time, all course certifications expire automatically 10-years after the year of issue.

### **14.6 – COURSE CERTIFIERS**

The USATF Road Course Certifier for your state can refer you to experienced measurers in your area or provide guidance if you choose to measure a course yourself. The list is online on the USATF website and has clickable names to direct e-mail addresses.



## **CHAPTER 15 – CONDUCTING ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **15.1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP PROGRAM**

Associations are required to present a championship in each of the following sport disciplines:

- Men's Track & Field
- Women's Track & Field
- Race Walking
- Youth Athletics
- Men's Long Distance Running
- Women's Long Distance Running
- Cross Country Running
- Masters Track & Field
- Masters Long Distance Running

Due to the difficulty in securing facilities and officials, and having conflicting events on the calendar, Association sport committees share resources and combine their championships. At the open level, Men's and Women's Track & Field championships are often combined and include a race walk, and most road running events include open men, open women, masters men, and masters women.

A passing grade can generally be achieved with:

- Combined Men's & Women's Open Track & Field Championships (including a race walk event)
- Junior Olympics Track & Field (including a race walk)
- Junior Olympics Cross Country Running
- Open and Masters Cross Country Running Championships
- Masters Track & Field Championships
- Partnering with one or more road races, designating them as championships, and recognizing open men, open women, and masters age divisions

### **15.2 – CHAMPIONSHIPS GUIDELINES**

#### *General guidelines*

There are some basic parameters all championships need to abide by.

The most important are:

- Event information must be posted on the Association website and included in the national online calendar at least 60 days prior to the event.
- Events must be sanctioned by the local USATF Association.
- Only current USATF members may score or earn awards and/or prize money in the championships.
- Only current USATF member clubs may score in the championships.
- Athletes may only represent a club if the club is a USATF member organization, and are otherwise unattached (even if they list a fictional or non-member "social" club as an affiliation).



- A printed event information brochure or web page (if the event only accepts online entries) is available and distributed to all Association clubs and members who fit the demographics of the championship, as well as non-members in the same demographic who could potentially become members in order to participate. The information should be ready to send and/or notify via e-mail at least 60 days prior.
- The event brochure and/or web page should include:
  - All applicable USATF logos identifying and branding the event as a Championship;
  - The appropriate title of the event, using USATF event-naming protocols (see below); and
  - A place during the entry process (on the form or during the on-line entry) to include their current USATF member number or use of the USATF on-line entry system which requires a member number before a registrant can proceed.
- USATF awards must be presented to individuals and teams in the standard USATF age groups for which the championship is being conducted.
- Results must be posted or linked on the Association website. Even if the championship is part of a larger event, such as a road race, the separate championship results must be formulated and posted.
- Junior Olympics' results must be sent electronically in the proper format to the appropriate depository so that the Junior Olympics' stepping-stone qualification process can continue.
- Road race championships must be conducted on USATF certified courses. This assures the participants of an accurate distance and meets USATF requirements for records. Off-road long distance events should be accurately measured and the actual distance advertised.

#### *Additional guidelines*

The choice of date, time, and site, plus all of the entry parameters, should be in the hands of your sport committees at the local level. The guide they use should be the USATF Competition Rules for competition officials, events, ages, schedules, site selection, and more. If you are not going to follow a particular rule, you should have a valid reason for that choice and advertise what you are going to do. For example: "Hurdles at the following age divisions will not be contested due to lack of 27" hurdles – 80m Hurdles for M80+ and W60+, and 200m/300m Hurdles for M70+ and W60+."

Your championship calendar should be determined prior to the start of the calendar year. Each championship should have a web page or set of web pages devoted to it. If you are still successful handing out flyers about the event, the entry form should include most of this information and point potential participants to the website for complete and up-to-date information.

Included on these web pages should be information on the following subjects:

- Date(s)
- Time(s) and/or time schedule (listing the events being contested for a track & field or cross country meet)
- Site, including a description of the stadium or map of the course (or link to the certified course map)
- Entry procedures, fees, and deadlines
- Whether day of event entry is permitted
- USATF membership requirements (must be members for USATF awards at any level, but you can hold a non-championship section if you wish to promote USATF among non-members)
- Team scoring
- Uniform policy
- Travel options
- Nearby hotels for those requiring an overnight stay
- Directions to the site, including parking areas for private vehicles and public transportation routes
- Awards – individual and team scoring

- Prize money offered (you should also state eligibility for prize money, since there are several categories of athletes – non-members, youth, high school, college – not eligible to receive prize money)
- Any expenses to be paid to athletes or teams coming to the championships
- Any ceremonies involved (opening, awards, closing)
- History of the event, if any, including defending and/or past champions
- Photos of past championships
- ADA Accommodations
- Anti-doping controls
- Technical meeting
- Status of entries; and more

### **15.3 – RECRUITING OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Your officials and volunteers stage the competition. You must have an adequate number of each to achieve success. The event should be analyzed carefully to determine the tasks which need to be accomplished from the time participants begin to arrive (including a warm-up day or days if applicable) to the time they depart. There should be an official's coordinator and a volunteer coordinator, each serving different purposes. An official's coordinator ensures that all contested events are adequately staffed with trained competition officials certified by USATF. A volunteer coordinator manages the staffing for non-competition tasks such as gate fees, packet pick-up, volunteer check-in, water/ fluid stations, awards, etc.

What happens outside of the competition venue is the responsibility of the Games or Organizing Committee, while the competition itself is the purview of the Referee(s) and the officials working under him, her, or them – umpires, field event lead officials, starters, clerks, and auto-timing personnel. Once the competition is underway, the Meet Director and volunteers – implement carriers, pit rakers, clothing carriers, and hurdle crew – work under that leadership to assist the competition, enabling officials to concentrate solely on athletes and performances.

Often, your local Officials Association will place the championships on its calendar, solicit volunteers, and assign them to their tasks. If the event is particularly attractive or noteworthy, you will get requests from officials and other USATF members outside of your Association to work the event. It is your choice whether to accept them.

### **15.4 – BENEFITS AND RISKS OF COMBINING CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISIONS**

There are two common event areas where the combination practice has both benefits and risks. They are (1) two or more track & field championships, including youth (usually Junior Olympics), open, and/or Masters, and (2) merging the youth and open/masters cross country meets.

The benefits of combining include:

- One set of publicity generally aimed most of your Association's members;
- One facility rental instead of two or three;
- One official's and volunteer's recruitment effort, although the longer schedule may result in more than normal number of shifts; and
- Families with competitors at multiple age levels can all compete at one site.

The risks are:

- Really long schedules;
- Tiring long days for your officials and volunteers;
- Tiring long days for your athletes and parents;
- Complicated time schedules; and
- Not all members of a family may be able to compete where events conflict.





## **CHAPTER 16 • ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES**

### **16.1 – ASSOCIATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Associations Committee consists of the Association Presidents or their respective designees, one (1) member named by each of the Sports Committees, four (4) at-large members appointed by the President of USATF, any person elected by the committee to serve in an officer position (not to exceed ten additional members) and the number of active athlete members equal to at least twenty percent (20%) of the total authorized membership, such athletes to be selected by the active athlete delegates to the USATF annual meeting.

The responsibilities of the Associations Committee include:

- To improve and develop the Organization and administration of the programs and activities of the Associations of USATF;
- Publicize and promote the programs, activities, and operation of USATF at the Association level;
- Collect and provide samples of model Association Bylaws, policies, and operating manuals;
- Develop sanction guidelines with the Sport Committees and Counsel (General and Corporate) which Associations shall follow to sanction events held within their jurisdictions;
- Assemble and disseminate information to Association officers on membership, events, schedules, services to athletes, and Association statistics; and
- Stage voter information debates, candidate forums, and candidate question and answer sessions prior to contested elections for National Officers and members of the Board of Directors.

The Associations Executive Committee (AEC) works on behalf of the Associations Committee throughout the year. The AEC is composed of current officers, one member from each geographic region, the immediate past chair, the subcommittee chairs and the requisite number of active athletes, to be chosen by the Athlete's Advisory Committee. The composition of the AEC is described in the Associations Committee's Operating Regulations. The AEC organizes and leads the Associations Committee's sessions at the USATF Annual Meeting and also organizes and leads the annual Associations Workshop. Individuals appointed by the Chair as liaisons to national Sport and Administrative committees, also assist the AEC. These individuals participate from time to time in the AEC's monthly conference calls.

The Associations Committee has dedicated USATF National Office staff assigned to work exclusively on Association and membership matters. The paid staff consists of administrators who promote the organization on a national level, handle the day to day business of the national organization, coordinate programs such as insurance, and collect and maintain membership and other data. The National Office staff includes Associations & Membership Departments. Both are available to assist local Associations, their officers, and members with any and all issues in their efforts to comply with any Association matters (as detailed in Regulation 7) that may arise.

While Associations have direct communication with the National Office and the national committees, they are encouraged to utilize the AEC to assist them with any issues related to communications or



activities involving the National Office or national committees. The Associations Workshop provides an opportunity for new and veteran Association leaders to learn about the functions of the National Office and about how membership, sanctions, and other administrative functions are handled. It is an important training ground for Association-level administrators and membership chairs. The Workshop offers an opportunity for Associations to network, share information and discuss issues. The AEC and National Office work together to develop the Workshop sessions to deal with the most important issues and concerns that have been raised over the past year. Each Association receives \$1,000 to help with reimbursement for travel and lodging for the Workshop.

The AEC plays an important role in helping Associations meet the standards for accreditation. Consulting teams from the AEC are available to visit Associations and assist them in working through disputes. AEC members will help mediate disputes within Associations, when local attempts to resolve them are unsuccessful, and before formal grievance procedures are initiated.

The AEC is responsible for the Associations Manual, a reference document that assists Associations with processes related to Association governance. The AEC is responsible for keeping the Associations Manual current and available. Association administrators and/or committee chairs are encouraged to communicate with the Associations Committee Region Representatives. These individuals are listed in the USATF Online Directory and serve as important links for information to and from the Associations. They are responsible for territories generally identical to the four Olympic Festival Zones.

## ***16.2 – REGIONS & REGION COORDINATORS***

For administrative purposes, USATF is divided into seven (7) regions. Each region has an appointed Region Representative. Information on USATF Regions and Region Representatives is located on the USATF website.